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WERNER'S
READINGS AND RECITATIONS
No. 15

COMPILED AND ARRANGED BY

CAROLINE EARNEST DICKENSON

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WERNER'S
Readings and Recitations.

No. 15.

LAST DAY IN DISTRICT NO. 6.

JOSEPHINE M. HARRIMAN.

[By permission of the author.]

THE students in district No. 6 had never given an exhibition, and when the new "schoolmarm" announced that each student should have a declamation at the close of the term, great was the consternation of the pupils. While the boys were eating their lunches at noon, each gave vent to his opinion concerning the coming entertainment. Tom, one of the big boys, said that he "wasn't afraid to speak a piece before the whole United States." Another boy said that he "wouldn't speak if his folks come." "Well, if I speak I won't have any silly girl-piece," said young Jack. The subject was discontinued, and during the rest of the term, each boy was preparing himself for the coming ordeal.

On the afternoon of the last day, the old schoolhouse was filled with "sisters, cousins, and aunts," all impatiently waiting for the exercises to begin.

The first speaker was John Johnson. Now, John was given to giggling on all occasions. If an audible smile ever reached the ear of the teacher, she immediately glanced at

John, and was usually rewarded by a giggle. John looked at the boy behind him and bestowed his usual "smile" and having taken his place on the platform, thus began:

"On Linden when the sun was low,
All bloodless lay the untrodden snow;
And dark as winter was the flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

"Few, few shall part where many meet.
The snow shall be their winding sheet;
And every turf beneath their feet
Shall be a soldier's sepulchre."

John wasn't the only one that giggled as he took his seat.

The next boy who was to declaim disliked very much to appear in public, but his sister had sketched his part for him, so with a dreadful frown he commenced:

"Maud Muller, on a summer's day,
Raked the meadows sweet with hay.
Beneath her torn hat glowed the wealth
Of simple beauty and rustic health.

"The judge rode slowly down the lane,
Smoothing his horse's chestnut mane.
She stopped where the cool spring bubbled up,
And filled for him her small tin cup.

"'Thanks,' said the judge, 'a sweeter draught
From a fairer hand was never quaffed.'
He spoke of grass and flowers and trees,
Of—I don't know what else he spoke of."

The audience was a bit surprised at the sudden close of this "descriptive" poem.

The "brave boy" next boldly commenced:

"Stand! The ground's your own, my braves!
Will ye give it up to slaves?
Will ye hope for greener graves?
Hope ye for mercy still?
What's the mercy despots feel.
Hear it in that battle peal—"

The "brave boy" took his seat in tears, and the other eakers smiled at one another.
Jack had prepared a humorous piece, one which he thought ry fitting for the occasion:

"The boy stood on the platform high
Whence all but him had gone,
The flame that lit each ear and eye
Shone round him and upon.
And this his stage-struck senses heard,
Unwelcome, oft-recurring word,
Dreaded by all, dreaded by each:
'Now, sir, your speech!'
First very pale, then very red,
The boy unto the master said,
'I have no piece!'
'You have no piece? You'll have no peace
Unless such nonsense soon shall cease.
A speech you must give now, my man!'
The boy said, 'I don't think I can.'
'Say something, sir!' the master said,
'Some verse or poem you have read
Or extract from the grand orations.'
The boy stepped out and looked about
And thus he tried—said first aside
('Hang declamations!')—
'Many men of earnest thought
Say that fame's a bubble,
Soon it breaks and leaves us naught
But—but—'

'What's the trouble?' said the master.
'That is all,' said the boy,
'I can recall.'
Next he thought he would
Give them something witty,
This effusion of T. Hood,
Merry, playful, pretty.
'Thou happy, happy elf
(But stop, first let me kiss away that tear),
Thou tiny image of myself—
(My love, he's poking peas into his ear'),—
That only made the scholars laugh,
'Twas not grand enough by half.
'Sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish, I
give my hand and my heart to this vote.'"

Jack forgot what came next, but at that moment one of the younger pupils slipped off her bench, falling on the floor with a good deal of noise. Congratulating himself, Jack made haste to introduce the incident into his medley:

"Take her up tenderly, lift her with care;
Fashioned so slenderly, young and so fair."

BOY AND GIRL.

MARY E. BRADLEY.

ONCE in the icy winter weather,
Two little children talked together.
One said—that was a boy, you see—
"This is the kind of weather for me!
Give me winter and ice and snow,

Give me a roaring wind to blow,
A pair of skates, and a frozen pond,
A coast on the slippery hill beyond;
And then, with a heap of snowballs white,
I'll beat the world in a stand-up fight!"

The other—she was a girl, you know—
Said, "Oh, I'm tired of frost and snow!
I can't go out but my fingers freeze,
And the cold wind makes me shiver and sneeze.
I wish I could hear the April rain,
And look at the warm blue skies again,
And pluck the violets down in the hollow,
And hear the song of the summer swallow!"

Then, with a smile, their gentle mother
Said to the sister and the brother:
"Winter is good, and summer, too;
For the snow is white, and the sky is blue,
And the wind blows north or the wind blows west,
Just as the Father sees it best."

"Yes, I know," with a laughing voice,
The boy returned, "but I take my choice.
Winter for me!" "And I would follow,"
His sister said, "the flying swallow.
When the summer goes, then he goes, too,
And that's the sensible thing to do."

In the southland, many a mile away,
The swallow sits by the reedy brook,
Watching a fly, with a sidelong look,
Nor knows nor cares what the children say.
But he will know when the April breeze
Softly whistles across the seas;
And when the violets bloom in the hollow,
Then, oh, then, we shall see the swallow.

THE HOUSE OF CLOUDS.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

I WOULD build a cloudy house
  For my thoughts to live in
When for earth too fancy-loose,
  And too low for heaven!
Hush! I talk my dreams aloud—
  I build it bright to see,—
I build it on the moonlit cloud
  To which I looked with thee.

Cloud-walls of the morning's gray,
  Faced with amber column,
Crowned with amber cupola
  From a sunset solemn!
May-mists for the casements fetch,
  Pale and glimmering,
With a sunbeam hid in each,
  And a smell of spring.

Build the entrance high and proud,
  Darkening and then brightening,
Of a riven thundercloud,
  Veinèd by the lightning.
Use one with an iris stain
  For the door so thin,
Turning to a sound like rain
  As I enter in.

Build a spacious hall thereby,
  Boldly, never fearing;
Use the blue place of the sky

Which the wind is clearing;
Branched with corridors sublime,
Flecked with winding stairs
Such as children wish to climb,
Following their own prayers.

In the mutest of the house
I will have my chamber.
Silence at the door shall use
Evening's light of amber,
Solemnizing every mood,
Softening in degree,
Turning sadness into good,
As I turn the key.

Be my chamber tapestried
With the showers of summer,
Close, but soundless,—glorified,
When the sunbeams come here;
Wandering harpers, harping on
Waters stringed for such,
Drawing color for a tune,
With a vibrant touch.

Bring a shadow, green and still,
From the chestnut forest;
Bring a purple from the hill,
When the heat is sorest;
Spread them out from wall to wall,
Carpet-wove around,
Whereupon the foot shall fall
In light instead of sound.

Bring fantastic cloudlets home
From the noontide zenith;
Range for sculptures round the room
Named as fancy weeneth:

Some be Junos, without eyes;
  Naiads, without sources;
Some be birds of paradise;
  Some, Olympian horses.

Bring the dews the birds shake off,
  Waking in the hedges,—
Those, too, perfumed for a proof,
  From the lilies' edges;
From our England's field and moor,
  Bring them calm and white in,
Whence to form a mirror pure
  For love's self-delighting.

Bring a gray cloud from the East,
  Where the lark is singing,
Something of the song, at least,
  Unlost in the bringing.
That shall be a morning chair,
  Poet-dream may sit in,
When it leans out on the air,
  Unrhymed and unwritten.

Bring the red cloud from the sun!
  While he sinketh, catch it.
That shall be a couch,—with one
  Sidelong star to watch it,—
Fit for poet's finest thought
  At the curfew sounding,
Things unseen being nearer brought
  Than the seen around him.

Poet's thought, not poet's sigh,
  'Las, they come together!
Cloudy walls divide and fly,
  As in April weather!
Cupola and column proud,

Structure bright to see—
Gone!—except that moonlit cloud,
To which I looked with thee!

Let them! Wipe such visionings
From the fancy's cartel—
Love secures some fairer things
Dowered with his immortal.
The sun may darken,—heaven be bowed—
But still unchanged shall be,—
Here in my soul,—that moonlit cloud,
To which I looked with thee!

THE BIRDS' CONVENTION.

MILLER HAGEMAN.

OVER the crumbs of a Southern camp shaded with palm and pine,
A company of convival birds sat down one day to dine;
While from the trees that leaned about on their uproarious glee,
The more conservative butternuts frowned superciliously.

There were parrots and peewees and nuthatches and chickadees and chats;
There were thrashers and cat-birds and cardinals with feathers in their hats;
There were redstarts and merles and cedar-birds and flycatchers and crows,
And little Maryland yellow-throats and grosbeaks and vireos.

At the head of the table sat the Owl with a sanctimonious face,

For he seemed, with both eyes tightly shut, forever saying grace;
While, as the dinner was discussed, the Chat cried out, "What cheer?"
And the Parrot took a mint julep, and they all drank blackberry beer.

And after they had dined and drunk and each one had wiped his mouth,
They all began to sing funny songs down there in the sunny south.
The Titmouse sang, "I will lift up my voice," upside down, till the birds all roared;
The Blue-jay twanged on his bagpipe, "In mercy hear, O Lord!"

The Doves billed and cooed in tender strains, "O sweet is the honeymoon;"
And the Sandpiper bobbed up and down and piped, "Don't make up your minds too soon."
The Meadow-lark shrilled from a tuft of grass, "I see you, you can't see me,"
And the Mocking-bird sat and mocked them all in the tall palmetto tree.

When
Up from the thickle-tops out Bobolinkum pops,
Shaking his love-calls over the lea;
Freaking and frolicking round in his rollicking,
Now with the butterfly, now with the bee;
Telling his Northern name, till all the birds exclaim,
As he breaks up the banquet, "That's Bob! See him! See!"
See how the Mocking-bird bends to that talking-bird,
"No use, Mocking-bird, you can't mock me."
Sing till the sunny South rings with thy mellow mouth,

Song-bird of Liberty, welcome to thee!
Sing till the valleys shine with that gay song of thine,
Sing till the leaves laugh outright on the tree;
Sing till the sunny air, sing till men everywhere
Sound back thy song through the land of the free;
Singing so airily, flying so fairily
In thy infectious, ebullient glee.
Listen now, Mocking-bird, to that quick talking-bird,
Here he comes singing to his Southern she,

With
"Bobolinkum, bobolinkum, funny, funny, don't you think him?
Kick your slipper, kick your slipper,
Twee, twee, twee, twee.
What's the matter, little lady, sitting there so very shady?
What Miss Kitty, what Miss Kitty, crying, crying, what a pity!
Me, me, me, me.
Ha, ha, I discover, she has lately lost her lover!
Never mind, dearie, cheer up, dearie,
Give me but a loving glance, sing, smile, skip, dance,
Kick your slipper, kick your slipper,
Free, free, free, free!
Ha, ha, Bobolinkum, ha, ha, what you thinkin'?
Come Miss Silver Thimple, Thimple, see your dimple, see your dimple,
Keep a-laughing, keep a-laughing,
Hee-hee-hee-hee.
Every maid's a little mellow till she gets another fellow.
Come now, dearie, cheer up, dearie,
You are very, very pretty, come, come, Kitty, Kitty,
Over hill and over hollow I'll fly, you follow.
Kick your slipper, kick your slipper,
Tse-tse-tse-tse-tse-tse-tse!"

THREE WOMEN.

THREE women in the waning of a drear November day,
When clouds were thickly spreading o'er the earth a mantle gray,
Sat idling, thinking, dreaming; one of hope, of love, of life;
One of wealth, of ease, of beauty; one of care, of woe, of strife.

One with a face uplifted—ah, a face pure, young, and fair,
With not a trace of sorrow, not a line of sin or care
Marring its pensive beauty, or staining its spotless white—
Looked from the western window into the dull gray night.

One, a glorious woman with burning, passionate eyes,
And hair like dusky shadows, lips tinged with crimson dyes,
Sat with her jeweled fingers swift threading a golden chain,
Heeding not the wind's lone sobbing, or the fall of the winter rain.

One, with a face storm-beaten—ah! a face sorrow-stained and worn,
And with a heart whose tendrils were cruelly bruised and torn—
Sat in the deepest shadow dreaming there her dream again,
Praying that God in His mercy would lift from her heart the pain.

Down through the dusky shadows, down through the dark, drear night,
There swept, like a gleam from heaven, a flood of unearthly light;
And on its shining stairway, an angel in robes of snow,
Came to the dreaming women and stood in the warm, bright glow.

"I came," and his voice, like music, rang through the shadowy room
And roused the idle dreamers and lifted the gathering gloom,
"I came to bring from heaven a wish that shall fill each heart.
Speak and it shall be granted; speak and receive your part."

"Let me be loved and honored, let me be mother and wife;
Give me these and no others for my joys in earthly life."
Thus spoke the pensive maiden with a smile almost divine,
And the angel's face grew brighter, as he said, "The gift be thine."

"Give me wealth and power, give me a world in my hand,
With only those around me, who live as I command."
Thus spoke the glorious woman with burning, passionate eyes,
And the angel whispered softly, "Thy wish is worldly and wise."

"Give me peace," said the other, "give me rest from this weary pain.
Oh, let me rest and slumber as the care-free child again."
And the angel whispered softly, "Be at rest world-weary one;
Peace shall come to thine lone heart. God's will to thee shall be done."

There, by the rosy firelight, sits a smiling, happy wife,
And the angel's gift is around her to bless and perfect her life.
There, in the gorgeous gaslight, reigns one, a fashion queen;
Her wish, as the angel promised, is found in this bright scene.

And down in the lone dark churchyard, the other has found her rest

---

From a life of toil and danger that was bitter at the best.
The peace the angel promised drew her up the shining way,
From her long, long night of sorrow, into God's eternal day.

GIVE ME REST.

GEORGE EDGAR GRISHAM.

[By permission of the author.]

"GIVE me rest, give me rest," said a merry child,
When its rompings and plays were o'er;
"I am sick, I would sleep on thy bosom, mother,
And wander away no more."

"Give me rest, give me rest," said a blooming youth,
As he struggled in hope's decline;
"I long for a friend, and a happy home,
Where the sun will forever shine."

"Give me rest, give me rest," said the miser at last,
When his heart was growing cold;
"There is no rest in the treasures of earth,
No pleasure in glittering gold."

"Give me rest, give me rest," was breathed from the lips
Of one with a broken heart;
Who had sought in vain 'mid the storms of life,
To find that "better part."

"Give me rest, give me rest," was a prayer upraised
From the mourner bending low,
O'er the grave where her heart's last jewel was laid;
"Give me rest from grief and woe."

"Give me rest, give me rest," said the sinking old man,
As the evening of life passed away;
"Give me rest in a joyous home on high,
In a world of eternal day."

"Give me rest, give me rest," is the wailing cry,
From the child to the gray-haired man;
All seek it in vain; there is no rest,
Till found in the spirit land.

PHUSSANDPHRET.

HAVE you heard of the land called Phussandphret,
Where the people live upon woes and regret?
Its climate is bad, I have heard folks say;
There's seldom, if ever, a pleasant day.
'Tis either too gloomy from clouded skies,
Or so bright the sunshine dazzles one's eyes;
'Tis either so cold one is all of a chill,
Or else 'tis so warm it makes one ill;
The season is either too damp or too dry,
And mildew or drought is always nigh;
For nothing that ever happened yet
Was just as it should be in Phussandphret.

And the children—it really makes me sad
To think that they never looked happy and glad,
It is "O dear me!" until school is done,
And 'tis then, "There never is time for fun."
Their teachers are cross, they all declare,
And examinations are never fair.
Each little duty they are apt to shirk,
Because they're tired, or 'tis too hard work.
Everyone is as grave as an owl,
And has pouting lips or a gloomy scowl;

Their voices whine and their eyes are wet
In this doleful country of Phussandphret.

Now, if ever you find your feet are set
On the downhill road into Phussandphret,
Turn and travel the other way,
Or you never will know a happy day.
Follow some cheerful face; 'twill guide
To the land of Look-at-the-Pleasant-side.
Then something bright you will always see,
No matter how dark the day may be.
You'll smile at your tasks and laugh in your dreams,
And learn that no ill is as bad as it seems.
So lose no time, but haste to get
As far as you can from Phussandphret.

THE TYPEWRITER TUNE.

THOUGH its coming be slow, we can all feel we know
That the "popular song" has its end,
And the hand-organ lay cannot last all the day;
Its horrors must cease to ascend;
But the typewriter tune, with its terrible twist,
Incessant responds to the rubber-hung wrist,
With its plick, plack, clinkety, clang!
Pluckety, pluckety, bang!

Your heart may be light and the future seem bright,
Ere you come within range of its sound,
But your spirits will sink to your shoes in a wink
From the noises that hover around,
When the alphabet goblins, so crooked and weak,
Are tortured till pain makes them shiver and squeak
With a plick, plack, clinkety, clang!
Pluckety, pluckety, bang.

THE MIRACLE OF CANA.

FRED EMERSON BROOKS.

[By permission of the author.]

THE waterpots were filled at God's behest;
Yet in the marriage wine no grape was pressed!
No tired feet the weary wine-press trod
To make this sacred vintage of our God!
As Nature doth proclaim a power divine,
Each drop of moisture turned itself to wine

In spite of arguments in Jesus met,
The world is full of doubting skeptics yet;
Believing naught in heaven or earth divine,
They doubt this miracle of Palestine;
They find the Holy Bible filled with flaws,
And pin their doubting faith to Nature's laws.

Ye scoffers of our sacred Lord, pray tell
Who tinted first the water in the well?
Who painted atmospheric moisture blue?
And gave the ocean waves their constant hue?
Whose moisture raised in clouds all colors lack;
The fleecy ones so white, the storm king black.
Save where the evening sun's bright rays incline
To turn this fleecy moisture into wine,
And lay a benediction on them all
Like purple grapes hung on a golden wall?
'Twas thus our Lord a sacred radiance shed,
Slow turning Cana's water vintage red.

If lilies, at His bidding, from the soil
Spring up, that neither know to spin nor toil;
In beauty yet more gorgeously arrayed
Than he of old who that great temple made,

Then why may not the gentle evening's dew,
At God's command take on a ruddy hue?

This whirling, surging world was made by One
Who might have made the wine as rivers run;
Yet put a sweeter nectar in the rills,
Fresh rippling from the vintage of the hills.
Watch Nature's miracle when day is dead,
And blushing Helios his good night said,
Slow dipping his hot face in cooling brine
Turns all the ocean billows into wine.

The sun and rain stretch o'er the earth a bow
With tints more beautiful than wine can show—
A frescoed arch in gorgeous colors seven—
A bridge where weak belief may walk to heaven.

Sometimes, athwart a sunset on the plain,
A passing storm-cloud dropping its ruby rain,
Because a God, whose face is hid from view,
Lets just a little glory filter through
This great libation poured at Nature's shrine,
To fill Sol's golden cup with evening wine?

Since Nature doth such miracles perform,
Why may not He who makes and rules the storm,
Of all his miracles the first and least,
Tint a few drops for Cana's wedding-feast?

The greatest marriage at the end shall be
When time is wedded to eternity!
All bidden are, the greatest and the least,
To taste the wine at heaven's great wedding-feast,
Where all the ransomed universe shall sing,
"Hosanna, to the everlasting King!"

I CAN'T, I WON'T, AND I WILL.

THREE little boys in a rollicking mood, out in the snow at play.
Their hearts are light, for the sun was bright on that glorious winter day.
Three little boys with shouts of glee slide down a snowy hill,
And the names of the rollicking little boys are "I Can't," "I Won't," and "I Will."

But play must cease; and a warning voice calls out from the open door,
"Come, boys, here's a task for your nimble hands; we must have it done by four."
"I Will" speeds away at his mother's command, with a cheerful and sunny face.
And "I Can't" follows on with a murmur and groan, at a weary and lagging pace.

But "I Won't," with a dark and angry frown, goes sauntering down the street,
And sullenly idles the time away till he thinks the task complete.
At school, "I Will" learns his lessons as well, and is seldom absent or late;
"I Can't" finds the lessons all too hard; "I Won't" hates books and slate.

So the seasons come and the seasons go, in their never-ceasing race,
And each little boy, now a stalwart man, in the busy world finds his place.
"I Will" with a courage undaunted toils, and with high and resolute aim,
And the world is better because he lives, and he gains both honor and fame.

"I Can't" finds life an uphill road; he faints in adversity,
And spends his life unloved and unknown in hopeless poverty.
"I Won't" opposes all projects and plans, and scoffs at what others have wrought,
And so in his selfish idleness wrapped, he dies and is soon forgot.

THE SEVEN STAGES.

ONLY a baby, kissed and caressed,
Gently held to a mother's breast.

Only a child toddling alone,
Brightening now its happy home.

Only a boy trudging to school,
Governed now by a sterner rule.

Only a youth living in dreams,
Full of promise, life now seems.

Only a man battling with life
Shared in now by a loving wife.

Only a father burdened with care,
Silver threads in dark brown hair.

Only a graybeard, toddling again,
Growing old and full of pain.

Only a mound o'ergrown with grass,
Dreams unrealized—rest at last.

APRIL FOOLS.

KATE MASTERSON.

Her Letter.

DEAR Jack, your letter came to-day.
I scarce know what to write;
If you were here—perhaps—I'd say—
Perhaps—you'd better call to-night.

You say you love me, dear old chap,
I've known that many a day;
But didn't think you cared a rap
For me—in *that* sweet way.

You've been just like a brother dear,
And never like a beau;
If you've been "pining for a year,"
You should have told me so!

'Tis April first, you know, old friend,
Take time to think aright;
Perhaps—you mean it for a joke—
Perhaps—you'd better call to-night!

His Letter.

My Darling Girl, I never wrote
The lines of which you tell;
Some April joker's sent the note,
And forged my hand as well.

But just suppose we spoil the fun,
My Maud, and with their tools.
We'll laugh the last, when they are done—
Two happy April fools.

I've loved you, Maud, just in "that way,"
And didn't dare to write;
Sweetheart, if I was there, you say—
Perhaps I'd *better* call to-night!

THE LAND OF NOWHERE.

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

DO you know where the summer blooms all the year round,
where there never is rain on a picnic day,
Where the thornless rose in its beauty grows, and little boys
never are called from play?
Oh! hey! it is far away, in the wonderful land of No-
where.
Would you like to live where nobody scolds, where you never
are told, "It is time for bed,"
Where you learn without trying, and laugh without crying,
where snarls never pull when they comb your head?
Then oh! hey! you must hie away to the wonderful land
of Nowhere.

Do you long to dwell where you never need wait, where no
one is punished or made to cry?
Where a supper of cakes is not followed by aches, and little
folks thrive on a diet of pie?
Then ho! hey! you must go, I say, to the wonderful land
of Nowhere.
You must drift down the river of Idle Dreams, close to the
border of No-man's Land;
For a year and a day you must sail away, and then you will
come to an unknown strand.
And ho! hey! If you get there—stay in the wonderful land
of Nowhere.

IN THE SPRING.

EVA WILDER MC GLASSON.

KIND of curyus fixin'—when
Grass is fresh'nin' up again,
Buds are bubblin' forf, an' those
Lilac-bushes fahly grows
Onderneaf your eyes—that you
Don't feel sap a-runnin', too.

Look like hair that's gittin' gray;
Ought to take an' blow away.
Leavin' room for new to grow,
Slick an' ily, don't you know!
Like young beech-leaves, just about
When they crowd the old ones out.

Yit some way—I can't tell why—
When thar's spring-time in the sky,
Showerin', shinin' right about
Like a gyrl that's in a pout—
'Stead o' hustlin', men-folks jest
Want to shut up shop an' rest.

Me? I couldn't move to save
My old framework from the grave!
Hain't no idy 'cept to lay
Round an' ack like every day
Was a Sunday—holy, sweet—
Nothin' doin' 'cept to eat.

Wouldn't ef I could! I 'low
It's a blessin' anyhow,
Sent from up above to call

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Time on busy folks thet all
Tries tharselves to git ahead
Of the folks thet's idle-bred.

It's a gift o' grace; an' when
I remember worldly men
Unly hev spring-fever sent
To 'em onct a year, I'm bent
On my knees with thanks that I'm
Favored with it all the time.

ANN JANE'S MOTHER AT A CLASSICAL CONCERT.

AH! here we are! What good seats. How nice of Herr Gobblemeister to give us such tickets! It's all *so* genteel, and I adore music. I used to hear a great deal of it in my early days. Ebenezer Peck, who used to keep steady company with sister Sally, played the flute lovely, and grandpa used to sing when he'd been taking too much cider. I had lessons, too. But it isn't everybody has time for music after they're married. I do often think, Ann Jane, that I'd have been splendid at music if I'd had time.

People are coming in. What a lot of foreigners! Should you think they were Dutch! None of their skirts hang right. "Hush!" do you say? Why should I hush? Ah, yes, here comes dear old Herr Gobblemeister. His collar is on crooked, and he ought to cut his hair; but I suppose he is all wrapped up in his music. How he loves it, to be sure! Do you know, Ann Jane, once when you weren't quite ready for your lesson, I played him a piece on our piano, and just in the very midst of it he gave the dreadfulest groan, and I stopped and asked him what was the matter. Said he: "Oh, forgiff me, madame. It is *so* touching vat you play, that my soul goes under, and if I do not cry out I dink I faint."

I didn't dare play any more to him, for he weighs two

hundred pounds, and I knew he'd smash some of the bric-a-brac if he went over; but what love for music that showed, didn't it? "Stop talking!" did you say! Oh, yes, we ought to listen if he's giving us a tune; but, Ann Jane, *that's* no tune. He's just doing scales to limber his fingers. Very sensible of him, for they may be stiff. He's quite on in years, though he has kept up his music so well. He'd better have done it before the company came, but perhaps the piano was not sent early enough. What's next? A quartet? Oh, those *people*. How many are there in that quartet? Four, I see. Well, I don't think much of that song. They don't seem able to catch up to each other, and one is clear down cellar while another is up garret. They don't hold a candle to our church choir. They haven't practiced together as they'd ought to, I know.

Well, my goodness! how mum you are, Ann Jane. What comes next? A piano performance representing a country scene; and if I'll listen I can understand it without words, eh? Well, I *am* listening, ain't I? Country scene, eh? Ah, yes! There's the rooster crowing; and that's the milk-boy; and now they're feeding the pigs, and the old gentleman is chopping kindlings; and do listen to the pork frying for breakfast? And there—there's the billy-goat, jest as he used to bleat of a morning in uncle's door-yard! I'm right, ain't I? No! Well, what was it? Pshaw! you don't tell me so! "A summer afternoon; villagers dancing to the music of the pipes; laughter, love-making, a rising storm, thunder, flight of terrified villagers, passing of the storm; evening, and the song of the nightingale!" That's what it is, eh? It sounded like the other to *me*, anyhow.

Well, there's a fiddler—the celebrated Scratchanowsky, eh? I don't believe he's celebrated. *I* never heard of him before. He doesn't play as well as Jimmy Jenkings down our way—the lame colored man, you know, that fiddles for the dancing. None of 'em seem to know tunes. It's silvery and way up enough, but there's nothing to it but shakes. How they do clap their hands! Glad it's over, I suppose.

I am. And here is old Herr Gobblemeister again. How they do go on! They seem to think it's fine, but what can you expect of poor ignorant foreigners? I wonder whether he *is* a good teacher, Ann Jane? Your pa pays a dreadful price for your lessons, and I shouldn't like to have you taught wrong, but I have an excellent ear for a tune and can turn one myself as well as most people, and he hasn't given us one this afternoon. I shall just let him know what I think of him when I see him. I suppose he's used to these poor foreigners that will swallow anything and clap their hands over it. And the way those Dutch ladies are staring at me—"Because I'm interrupting the music," eh? Well, Ann Jane, if I am to sit like the deaf and dumb in an asylum, and be put upon like this, I shall go home. You can sit it out if you like; but you can tell your Herr Gobblemeister that your ma knows good music when she hears it, and that *she* don't think it worth her while to stay.

THE SONG THAT SILAS SUNG.

SAM WALTER FOSS.

NEIGHBOR Silas sung a song
Every day his whole life long—
Sung it gladly 'neath the cloud
That hung o'er him like a shroud,
Or, when sunbeams, with their play,
Gleamed and glorified his way,
Like a shower of joy outflung
Was the song that Silas sung:
"Let the howlers howl,
And the scowlers scowl,
And the growlers growl,

And the gruff gang go it;
But behind the night
There's plenty of light,
And everything is all right,
And I know it!"

Like the battle-drum to me
Was the song of victory;
Like the flute's exultant strain
'Mid the wounded and the slain;
Like the quick, blood-stirring fife
On the battle-plain of life—
Far and free the echoes rung
Of the song that Silas sung:
"Let the howlers howl,
And the scowlers scowl,
And the growlers growl;
And the gruff gang go it;
But behind the night
There's plenty of light,
And everything is all right,
And I know it!"

Silas's soul has taken flight,
Passed in music through the night,
Through the shadow chill and gray,
And gone singing on its way;
But the quaint song that was his
Cheers the saddened silences.
Still glad triumph notes are flung
From the song that Silas sung:
"Let the howlers howl,
And the scowlers scowl,
And the growlers growl,
And the gruff gang go it;
But behind the night

There's plenty of light,
And everything is all right,
And I know it!"

VICTORIA GREY.

EUGENE J. HALL.

A GIDDY young girl was Victoria Grey,
One proud and determined to have her own way;
And, rather than bend,
She would lose her best friend,—
She was one upon whom one could never depend.

That she thought herself charming was plain to be seen
By her confident manners and satisfied mien.
She was one of that kind
That one often will find,
With a small, selfish heart and diminutive mind.

Victoria Grey had a passion for dress,
Though taste and good judgment she did not possess.
On the street she would flirt,
And sweep through the dirt,
With thirty-six yards of light silk in her skirt.

She had many lovers, it may be a score,—
She had promised to marry a dozen or more;
All felt happy and gay
At the confident way
They were treated and loved by Victoria Grey.

Augustus Van Quirk was her fortunate flame
(Victoria loved his euphonious name),—

A weak little fellow
Whose whiskers were yellow,
With little white hands and a mind rather mellow.

He took her to operas, dances, and plays;
He courted and wooed her in various ways;
He whispered a store
Of affectionate lore
That blighted the hopes of the dozen or more.

They were married at last. 'Twas a famous affair
Made brilliant by presents of real plated ware—
'Twas a transient display,
The talk of a day,
And this was the end of Victoria Grey.

Five years have passed by, and Augustus Van Quirk
Has never been guilty of going to work.
Just over the way
Is a small sign to-day,
"Boarding—Mrs. Van Quirk." (*Née* Victoria Grey.)

"SPÄCIALLY JIM."

I WAS mighty good-lookin' when I was young,
Peert an' black-eyed an' slim,
With fellers a-courtin' me Sunday nights,
Späcially Jim.
The likeliest one of 'em all was he,
Chipper an' han'som' an' trim;
But I tossed up my head an' made fun o' the crowd,
Späcially Jim.
I said I hadn't no 'pinion o' men,
An' I wouldn't take stock in *him!*

But they kep' up a-comin' in spite o' my talk,
  Späcially Jim.
I got so tired o' havin' 'em roun'
  (Späcially Jim),
I made up my mind I'd settle down
  An' take up with him.
So we were married one Sunday in church,
  'Twas crowded full to the brim;
'Twas the only way to git rid of 'em all,
  Späcially Jim.

MY LAST DUCHESS.

ROBERT BROWNING.

THAT'S my last Duchess painted on the wall,
  Looking as if she were alive. I call
That piece a wonder, now. Fra Pandolf's hands
Worked busily a day, and there she stands.
Will't please you sit and look at her. I said
"Fra Pandolf" by design, for never read
Strangers like you that pictured countenance,
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,
But to myself they turned (since none puts by
The curtain I have drawn for you, but I),
And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,
How such a glance came there; so, not the first
Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 'twas not
Her husband's presence only called that spot
Of joy into the Duchess' cheek. Perhaps
Fra Pandolf chanced to say, "Her mantle laps
Over my lady's wrist too much," or "Paint
Must never hope to reproduce the faint
Half-flush that dies along her throat." Such stuff
Was courtesy, she thought, and cause enough

For calling up that spot of joy. She had
A heart—how shall I say?—too soon made glad,
Too easily impressed; she liked whate'er
She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.
Sir, 'twas all one! My favor at her breast,
The dropping of the daylight in the West,
The bough of cherries some officious fool
Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule
She rode with round the terrace,—all and each
Would draw from her alike the approving speech,
Or blush, at least. She thanked men,—good! but thanked
Somehow—I know not how—as if she ranked
My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name
With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame
This sort of trifling? Even had you skill
In speech (which I have not) to make your will
Quite clear to such a one, and say, "Just this
Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss,
Or there exceed the mark"—and if she let
Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set
Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse,—
E'en then would be some stooping; and I choose
Never to stoop. O sir! she smiled, no doubt,
Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without
Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands;
Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands
As if alive. Will't please you rise? We'll meet
The company below, then. I repeat,
The Count your master's known munificence
Is ample warrant that no just pretence
Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;
Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed
At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go
Together down, sir. Notice Neptune, though,
Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,
Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me!

A RHYME OF ROBIN PUCK.

HELEN GRAY CONE.

HOWSOE'ER the tale be spread,
Puck, the pranksome, is not dead.

At such tidings of mishap
Any breeze-blown Columbine
Would but toss a scarlet cap,
Would but laugh with shaken head,
"Trust it not, do not repine.
Puck, the pranksome, is not dead!"
If you know not what to think,
Ask the tittering bobolink.
Straightway shall the answer rise,
Bubbling from his gleeful breast:
"Dead? 'Tis but his latest jest;
Robin Puck, the wild and wise,
Frolics on and never dies!"
Had we but the elfin sight
On some pleasant summer night,
We should see him and his crew
In the fields that gleam with dew.
Had we but the elfin ear
(Pointed sharply like a leaf),
In the meadows we should hear
Fairy pipings, fine and brief,
Shrilled through throats of tiniest flowers.
Would that subtler sense were ours!
Tricksy Puck! I shall not tell
How it is I know him well.
Swift yet clumsy, plump yet wee,
Brown as hazel-nut is he;
And from either temple springs

Such a waving, hair-like horn
As by butterflies is worn;
Glassy-clear his glistening wings,
Like the small green-bodied flies'
In the birch-woods; and his eyes,
Set aslant, as blackly shine
As the myriad globes wherein
The wild blackberry keeps her wine;
And his voice is piercing thin,
But he changes that at will—
Mocking rogue!—with birdlike skill.
How it is I must not tell.

Ah! with some rare, secret spell
Should we bathe, in moonlit dew,
Eyes that this world's book have read,
We should see him and his crew
In the dreamy summer dell;
For, howe'er the tale be spread,
Puck, the pranksome, is not dead!

ONLY ONE KIND WORD.

ELLA DARE.

'TWAS a little thing, only one kind word, in the hurry and bustle of every day,
But the heart was touched and the soul was stirred, and a rainbow of hope spanned the darkened way!
'Twas a world-worn man with a weight of woe, who was groping along in the crowded street,
When he heard a voice that was soft and low, and a word that was warm and passing sweet;

And the sluggish life in his veins moved fast, and the light
in his eye was the olden light.
'Twas the one kind word he had met and passed, 'twas the
blue in the sky, where the stars shine bright.
'Twas a sinning girl, with a reckless air, who was one of a
throng on a sunny day,
And her painted cheek and her stony stare were the signs of a
soul on its downward way.
But a greeting came, and a kindly word, with a message of
grace to the erring one.
And the centred depths of her nature stirred, till she turned
from the wrong, and the good was won!

HEBE.

SEE, what a beauty! Half-shut eyes,
Hide all buff and without a break
To the tail's brown tuft that mostly lies
So quiet one thinks her scarce awake;
But pass too near, one step too free,
You find her slumber a devil's truce;
Up comes that paw—all plush, you see,—
Out four claws, fit for Satan's use.

'Ware! Just a sleeve's breadth closer, then,
And your last appearance on any stage?
Loll, if you like, by Daniel's den,
But clear and away from Hebe's cage—
That's Hebe! listen to that purr
Rumbling as from the ground below.
Strange, when the ring begins to stir,
The fleshings always vex her so.

A curious record, Hebe's. Reared
In Italy; age—that's hard to fix;

Trained from a cub, until she feared
  The lash, and learned her round of tricks;
Always a traveler—one of two
  A woman-tamer took in hand,
Whipped them, coaxed them, and so they grew
  To fawn or cower at her command.

None but Florina—that was her name,
  And this the story of Hebe here—
Entered their cage; the brutes were tame
  As kittens, though, their mistress near.
A tall, proud wench as ever was seen,
  Supple and handsome, full of grace;
The world would bow to a real queen
  That had Florina's form and face.

Her lover—for one she had, of course—
  Was Marco, acrobat, circus-star,
The lightest foot on a running horse,
  The surest leap from a swinging bar;
And she—so jealous he dared not touch
  A woman's hand, and, truth to say,
He had no humor to tease her much
  Till a girl in spangles crossed their way.

'Twas at Marseilles, the final scene,
  This pretty rider joined the ring,
Ma'am'selle Celeste or Victorine,
  And captured him under Florina's wing.
They hid their meetings, but when, you see,
  Doubt holds the candle, love will show,
And in love's division the one of three,
  Whose share is lessened, needs must know.

One night, then, after the throng outpoured
  From the show, and the lions my lady's power
Had been made to feel, with lash that scored

And eye that cowed them, a snarling hour;
(They were just in the mood for pleasantry
Of those holidays when saints were thrown
To beasts, and the Romans, entrance-free,
Clapped hands)—that night, as she stood alone,

Florina, Queen of the Lions, called
Sir Marco toward her, while her hand
Still touched the spring of a door that walled
Her subjects safe within lion-land.
He came there panting, hot from the ring,
So brave a figure that one might know,
Among all his tribe, he must be king,
If in some wild tract you met him so.

"Do you love me still," she asked, "as when
You swore it first?" "Have never a doubt!"
"But I have a fancy—men are men,
And one whim drives another out."
"What fancy? Is this all? Have done;
You tire me." "Look you, Marco! oh,
I should die, if another woman won
Your love—but would kill you first, you know!"

"Kill me? and how—with a jealous tongue?"
"Thus!" shrieked Florina, and slipped the bolt
Of the cage's door, and headlong flung
Sir Marco, ere he could breathe, the dolt!
Plump on the lion he bounced, and fell
Beyond, and Hebe leapt for him there.
No need for their lady's voice to tell
The work in hand for that ready pair.

They say one wouldn't have cared to see
The group commingled, man and beast,
Or to hear the shrieks and roars—all three
One red, the feasters and the feast!

Guns, pistols, blazed, till one lion sprawled,
  Shot dead, but Hebe held to her prey
And drank his blood, while keepers bawled
  And their hot irons made yon scars that day.

But the woman? True, I had forgot,
  She never flinched at the havoc made,
Nor gave one cry, but there on the spot
  Drove to the heart her poniard-blade,
Straight, like a man, and fell, nor stirred
  Again; so that fine pair were dead.
One lied, and the other kept her word,
  And death pays debts, when all is said.

So they hustled Hebe out of France
  To Spain, or may be to England first.
Then hitherward over seas, by chance,
  She came as you see her, always athirst,
As if, like the tigresses that slink
  In the village canes of Hindoostan,
Of one rare draught she loves to think,
  And ever to get it must plan and plan.

HER NAME.

IN search, from A to Z, they passed,
  And "Marguerita" chose at last,
But thought it sounded far more sweet
To call the baby "Marguerite."
When grandma saw the pet,
She called her "darling Margaret."
Next, Uncle Jack and Cousin Aggie
Sent cup and spoon to "little Maggie."
And grandpa the right must beg
To call the lassie "bonnie Meg."
(From "Marguerita" down to "Meg!")
And now she's simply "little Peg."

BUYING A FELLER.

MARIETTA HOLLEY.

Arranged by NORRINE COCHRAN.

SECH an experience as I hev hed this mornin', Tirzah Ann! Soon after breakfast Josiah an' the boy went to the mill with grist, an' I sot down to mend an old vest of Josiah's. I hedn't much more'n got sot down when there come a rap onto the kitchen door behind me, and I sez, "Come in." An' in walked a tall, slim feller with a pale, patient face, but a persistent look to him, as though he wasn't one to be trifled with. I didn't dislike his looks a mite at first, an' I sot him a chair. But, dear me, little did I dream what was a-comin', fur if you will believe it he hedn't much more'n sot down when he says to me, right there in broad daylight, in the middle o' the forenoon, an' right to my face, says he:

"I called in this mornin', mom, to see if I couldn' sell you a feller."

"Sell me a feller!" I jest managed to gasp out, fur I wuz fairly paralyzed by his impudence; "sell me a feller!"

"Yes," says he, "I hev got some o' the best kinds they make, an' I didn't know but I could sell you one."

Sez I, gettin' my tongue back, "Buy a feller! you ask me at my age, an' with my respectability, an' after kerryin' around sech principles ez I hev been kerryin' around fur twenty years, you ask me to buy a feller!"

"Yes, I didn't know but you would want one, I hev got the best make."

"I'll let you know, young man," sez I, "that I hev got a feller o' my own, as good a one as ever wuz made, and one I hev hed fur twenty years, an' over."

"Well, mom," sez he, with that stiddy look o' his'n, "a

feller you hev hed fur twenty years must be out o' gear by this time."

"Out o' gear," sez I, speakin' up sharp, "you will be out o' gear yourself, young man, if I hear any more sich talk out o' your head."

"I hope you will excuse me, mom," sez he, "it hain't my way to run down anybody else's fellers."

"Wall, I guess you hedn't better try it again in this house," sez I. "I guess it won't be very healthy fur you."

"Can I sell you some other attachment, mom? I hev got 'em of all kinds."

"Sell me another attachment? No, sir, you can't. My attachment is ez firm an' endurin' ez the rocks."

"I presume yours wuz good enough in its day, mom, but it must be old-fashioned. You'd better let me sell you a feller, mom."

I declare for't, my first thought wuz to turn him right out, an' shet the door in his face. An' then agen I thought, I am a member of the meetin' house, I must be patient an' long sufferin', an' may be this is a chance to do good. I will convince him o' the nefariousness o' his conduct; an' so I began to soar.

"Young man," sez I, a-wavin' my right hand in a broad an' sweepin' manner, "young man, when you talk o' buyin' an' sellin' fellers, you hev tackled a very serious subject. I hev hearn o' sech things, yes, I hev hearn o' them; but little did I dream that I should ever be approached on the subject." Here my breath give out, fur I hed used my deepest principled tone, an' its awful tuckerin' out; you jest hev to stop fur breath. An' he looked at me with that same patient look, an' sez he:

"What you say, mom, is very true an' even beautiful an' eloquent; but, as I said, I stopped in this mornin', mom, to see if I could sell you—"

"I know you did," sez I; "I heard it with my own ears. If it hed come thro' two or three or even one pair of ears, I wouldn't hev believed it. I never could hev believed it, that

any human cretur would hev dared to stand before an' try to sell me a feller. Sell me a feller? Why even in my young days do you s'pose I'd ever try to *buy* a feller? No, sir. Fellers must come free an' spontaneous or not at all. Never wuz I the woman to advance one step toward any man in the way o' courtship—hav'n' no occasion to do so, bein' one that hed more offers than I knowed what to do with. An' never would I hev married, never, if love hedn't gripped holt o' my soul an' drawed me along to the marriage altar. I loved the feller I married, an' he wuz the only feller in all the world fur me."

Sez he: "You are under a mistake, mom."

Sez I: "Now don't you tell me thet agen if you know what is good fur you. I guess I know my own mind. I wuz past the age o' whifflin' an' foolin' round. I married that feller from pure love, an' no other reason. The idee o' sellin' me a feller!" But he stood there firm an' immovable, an' sez he:

"I didn't mean no offence, mom. Sellin' attachments is what I get my livin' by."

"Wall, I'd rather not get any livin'," sez I. "I should rather not live."

"As I said, mom, I get my livin' that way; an' one o' your neighbors told me that your feller wuz an old one, an' sort o' givin' out, an' I've got all the latest improvements, an' that may be I could sell you one."

"You miserable coot," sez I, "what do you s'pose I want with another feller? Do you s'pose I'd swap Josiah Allen fur all the fellers that ever swarmed on the globe? If a feller wuz made o' gold from head to foot, with diamond eyes an' a garnet nose, do you s'pose he would look half so good to me ez Josiah Allen does? An' I would thank the neighbors to mind their own business an' let my affairs alone. What if he is gittin' old an' worn out? What if he is a-givin' out? He's allus kinder spindlin' in the spring o' the year. He is a little tizicky, an' breathes short, an' his liver may not be the liver it once wuz, but he'll come round all

right when the weather moderates. An' may be they meant to insinuate somethin' about his bein' so bald an' losin' his teeth. But I'll let you know, an' I'll let the neighbors know, that I didn't marry that man fur hair; I didn't marry that man fur teeth; an' a few locks more or less, or a handful o' teeth, has no power over my love."

"Sometimes," sez he, sort o' dreamily, "sometimes we repair old fellers."

"Wall you won't repair my feller, I can let you know that. The impudence o' the hull idee!" says I, roustin' up afresh, "goes ahed o' anything I ever dreamed of. Repair my feller! I want him jest ez he is. I would scorn to repair him. I could if I wanted to; his teeth could be sharpened up, what he has got, an' new ones sot in, an' I could paint his head black and paste transfer flowers onto it; but do you s'pose that any artificials that wuz ever made, or any hair, if it wuz ez luxuriant ez Ayer'ses Vigor, could look so good to me ez that bald head that has been shinin' across the table at me fur so many years? I tell you, there is memories an' joys an' sorrows a-clusterin' round that head that I wouldn't swap fur all the beauty an' the treasure o' this world. Yes, there is memories o' sorrows borne by both, an' so made holier an' more blessed than happiness. That head has bent with mine over a little coffin an' over open graves when he shared my anguish, an' stood by me under the silent stars when he shared my prayers, my hopes, fur the future. He'd look better to me than any other feller that ever walked the globe if he hedn't a tooth left in his head or a hair on his scalp. Ez long ez Josiah has got body enough left to wrap round his soul, an' keep it down here on earth, my heart, every mite of it, is his'n."

"You are laborin' under a mistake, mom."

"No, I ain't laborin' under no mistake; an' don't you repeat your infamous proposal." Sez I, more mildly, ez he took up his hat an' little box he had, an' started fur the door; an' seein' I wuz goin' to get rid o' him, I felt softer toward him: "I dare presume you thought I wuz a single woman,"

havin' been told time an' agen that I wuz young lookin' fur my age, an' fair complected. "I won't think," sez I, feelin' still softer to him as he opened the door, "I won't think fur a moment that you knew who it was you made your infamous proposal to. But never, never make it agen to any livin' cretur, married or single!"

He went out the door lookin' kind o' meachin'; but will you believe it, if he didn't turn round on the doorstep an' strikin' that same patient, determined attitude o' hisen, says he:

"You are mistaken, mom, I merely called this mornin' to see if I could sell you—"

But I jest shet the door in his face, an' went upstairs. An' I don't know how long he stayed, nor don't care. I told Josiah about it when he came home, an' I tell you my eyes fairly snapped, I wuz so mad about it; but he said, he "believed et wuz a sewin'-machine man, tryin' to sell me a feller fur my machine." But I didn't believe a word of it. I believe he wuz a mean cretur.

LAZYLAND.

MARGARET VANDEGRIFT.

THREE travelers wandered along the strand,
Each with a staff in his feeble hand;
And they chanted low,
"We are go-o-o-ing slow-ow,
Slowly to Lazyland.

"They've left off eating and drinking there;
They never do any thinking there;
They never walk
And they never talk,
And they fall asleep without winking there;

"Nobody's in a hurry there.
They are not permitted to worry there;
'Tis a wide, still place,
And not a face
Shows any symptoms of flurry there.

"No bells are rung in the morning there;
They care not at all for adorning there.
All sounds are hushed,
And a man who rushed
Would be traced with absolute scorning there.

"They do not take any papers there,
No politicians cut capers there;
They have no 'views,'
And they tell no news,
And they burn no midnight tapers there.

"No lovers are ever permitted there;
Reformers are not permitted there;
They argue not
In that peaceful spot
And their clothes all come ready fitted there.

"Electricity has not been heard of there;
And steam has been spoken no word of there;
They stay where they are;
And a coach or car
They have not so much as a third of there.

"Oh, this world is truly crazy land,
A worrying, hurrying, mazy land.
We cannot stay,
We must find the way,—
If there is a way to Lazyland."

A CHILD'S LAUGHTER.

ALGERNON C. SWINBURNE.

ALL the bells of heaven may ring,
All the birds of heaven may sing,
All the wells on earth may spring,
All the winds of earth may bring
All sweet sounds together;
Sweeter far than all things heard,
Hand of harper, tone of bird,
Sound of woods at sundown stirred,
Welling water's winsome word,
Wind in warm, wan weather;

One thing yet there is that none
Hearing, ere its chime be done,
Knows not well the sweetest one
Heard of men beneath the sun,
Hoped in heaven hereafter;
Soft and strong and loud and light,
Very sound of very light,
Heard from morning's rosiest height,
When the soul of all delight
Fills a child's clear laughter.

Golden bells of welcome rolled
Never forth such notes, nor told
Hours so blithe in tones so bold,
As the radiant mouth of gold
Here that rings forth heaven.
If the golden-crested wren
Were a nightingale, why, then,
Something seen and heard of men
Might be half as sweet as when
Laughs a child of seven.

MAMMY'S STORY.

SUSAN ARCHER WEISS.

AH, well do I remember how, in the happy olden days,
I sat beside the nursery fire and saw the hickory blaze,
While I heard the wind without, and the splashing of the rain,
And the broad magnolias tapping at the dripping window-pane,
When Mammy, rocking slowly, with the baby on her knee,
Told many a wondrous story—"jus' ez true ez true could be."

"Well, once dar wuz two leetle boys, named Jeems an' Johnny Wood;
An' Jeems wuz bad ez bad could be, an' Johnny he wuz good.
Deir Ma, she had a bag o' gol' hid in de cubby-hole,
An' Jeems he foun' it out, an' all dat heap o' money stole;
An' den he run away, so fas' he los' a rubber shoe,
An' lef' his Ma an' brer so poo' dey dunno what to do.

"Well, Johnny for his poo' Mamma, he wucked de bes' he could,
Tel once she sent him to de swamp to chop some piny wood;
An' dar a lot o' 'gators come—er free, er fo', er five,
An' de biggest gobbled Johnny up, an' swollered him alive;
An' dar inside de critter's maw, why, what did he behol'
But de oder Injy-rubber shoe, an' his mudder's bag o' gol'.

"Well, den he tuck his leetle axe, an' right away he hack,
Tel he chop a mons'ous hole right frough de 'gator's ugly back.
Den out he pop an' nebber stop tel he reach his mudder's doo'
An' poured de shinin' money dar, right on de parlor floo'!
Now, honey, min' an' 'member dis, from de tale you jus' been tol',
De bad, dey alluz come to bad—an' de good, dey gits de gol'."

LITTLE JIM.

GEORGE R. SIMS.

OUR little Jim
Was such a limb
His mother scarce could manage him.
His eyes were blue,
And looked you through
And seemed to say,
"I'll have my way!"
His age was six,
His saucy tricks
But made you smile,
Though all the while
You said, "You limb,
You wicked Jim,
Be quiet, do!"

Poor little Jim!
Our eyes are dim
When, soft and low, we speak of him.
No clattering shoe
Goes running through
The silent room.
Now wrapped in gloom,
So still he lies,
With fast-shut eyes.
No need to say
Alas! to-day,
"You little limb,
You baby Jim,
Be quiet, do!"

HEADS, NOT HEARTS, ARE TRUMPS.

A MONOLOGUE FOR A WOMAN.

KATE FIELD.

TEARS in your eyes, and why? Because you find
That he you love is mortal after all?
Dear silly coz, what else did you expect?
You met the man, and though you said no word,
Your eyes were eloquent, and warmly spoke
The electric language of the universe.
You thought him brilliant; aye, he's truly so,
Brilliant enough to know, ere many days,
What spell the magic of his genius cast
Upon a bright but untrained country girl.
Your fresh, frank ways, your eager earnestness
Were revelations to the sated lion.
He looked on you as on a novelty,
A creature quite unlike the simpering dolls
Whose fans he flutters as he talks sweet lies.
You innocently touched his weakest point,
And that, as in most men, is vanity.
'Tis writ in books, 'tis said by wagging tongues,
That women are the weakest vessels, coz.

Our love of approbation is so great
We'd sell our birthright for a mess of it,
When our potential "he" pours in our ears,
The honey kept on tap for our poor sex.
Man, coz,—the stronger vessel, being strong,
Jumps cracks, and wanders at his own sweet will.
He's not responsible if his poor head
Is turned by winsome glance and loving speech.
It makes a deal of difference in this world

Whether you're born a man or woman, coz.
Man ever is an Adam; woman, Eve.
He asks to taste the apple in her hand,
And when he's eaten it, and is arraigned,
Exclaims, "Behold, the woman gave it me!"
Not manly, think you, to thus shirk results?

Weeping still?
You fancy, coz, yours is the only heart
That has been trifled with? You long for death?
You think the sun will never shine again,
That life will taste of naught but Dead Sea fruit?
Now look at me. I'm envied by the world
Because I'm handsome, rich, endowed with wit
And tact enough to know just what to say
And when to say it. My salon is thronged
With genius and with beauty, coz, because
I've sense enough to listen to the men,
Acting as whip to each one's hobby-horse.
Because of this, some call me politic,
But all admit that I am popular,
And you, 'mong others, long to wear my shoes.
Why, silly coz, I'd gladly change with you
To lose my memory of earlier days.

At your age I loved madly, loved with all
The passion of a soul that loves but once.
I thought my love returned; his vows, at least,
Were warm enough to melt a colder heart
Than nature gave to me. The man was born
Below my sphere, but genius knows no rank;
And I placed him above, beyond, the herd
Of titled nobodies with addled brains.
I lived for this one man—for him alone.
We plighted troth. My parents threatened then
To cast me off, to disinherit me!
"Defy our will and you may beg for bread,

Ere we will give heed to your misery," said they.
I loved, and so was ready to lose all.

Not so the hero of my one romance.
His face grew pallid and his speech confused.
He kissed me hastily; said he'd return
To claim me. How think you, coz, he claimed me?
He wrote a brief, cold note, in which he said
That he was far too proud a man to wed
In opposition to my family,
His grief had forced him to the Continent.
He hoped I might be happy, and he signed
Himself, "sincerely" mine, etc.
None born with strong physique e'er die of love.
I did not even faint, or go to bed
Raving with fever, as girls do in books.
I sent back that man's note without remark,
Assured my parents that their will was mine,
Was taken to their arms, and soon betrothed
To the old lord whose name I've so long borne.
He, to reward me for my sacrifice,
Died, after a most placid honeymoon,
Leaving me mistress of his large estates.
Then passed away my parents, blessing me.

Restless, distraught,
I wandered to and fro for three long years,
Seeking to dull the pain about my heart
By change of scene and new acquaintances.
One day 'mid Roman ruins, I came upon
The man I once adored. He dared to speak;
Begged me to take him to my heart again,
Now death had broken down the barriers.
The devil in me had got the upper hand;
I lashed the craven creature with my tongue,
And sent him cringing from me.

"Nevermore let me behold your face," were my last
words.
Full well have they been heeded.
Then I came
Back to my native land, took up the game
Society demanded I should play,
And faithfully I've played it, though alone
I've held the cards, no partner aiding me.

Such is my story. Without love, or child—
The only longings of a woman's heart—
I'm pointed out as fortune's favorite.
Perhaps I am!
Come, cousin, dry your tears;
Your wound's skin deep,—mine penetrated far,
And yet I'm not what people call a wreck.
You'll have no appetite; you'll lie awake;
You'll sigh, and sadly smile at merry jests.
This will endure for, possibly, a month,
During which time I promise to disclose
The true proportions of the demigod
You've worshipped at the altar of your dreams.
I'll prove to you, despite the charm of hearts,
That in the game of life the heads are trumps.
Is it agreed? Then look up while I bathe
Your eyes in cooling spray. Now you are like
Your dear old self.
I'm hungry. Let us dine.

CHANGED HER MIND.

DEAR BELLE, I went to church last night,
And saw your friend. Why, he's a fright!
At least, I think so. What is there, pray,
About his looks that made you say

That I'd admire him? Goodness me!
He's homely, Belle, as he can be.
Monstrous mouth, retreating forehead,
And goggle eyes. I think he's horrid.

* * * *

I've seen that Mr. Knox again—
Your friend, I mean, that homely man
Of whom I wrote—and I declare
I must admit he has an air
About him that one must admire;
But, Belle, I think I soon shall tire
Of his rude manners. Why, the man
Stared till I had to use my fan!

* * * *

I went last night to the soirée,
And who, think you, chanced there to be?
Why, Charley Knox! We stayed till four.
I danced with him six times, or more,
And he asked me—don't you tell—
To go with him next time. Now, Belle,
I'm not in love. You'll laugh, I know,
But still I say he's not my beau.

* * * *

Oh, Belle! Oh, Belle! What do you think
Happened? I can't sleep a wink
Until I've told my dearest friend.
Oh, Belle, my maidenhood is at an end—
That Charley Knox! Oh dear, oh my!
I don't know whether to laugh or cry—
I never yet did feel so queer—
Just think! I'm engaged, my dear.

THE DEMON KITTENS.

I'VE two pretty little kittens—one is brown and one is gray—
You should see the comic antics that the little demons play.
You would roll about with laughter and I fancy shed a tear,
If you watched them play at leap-frog on my crowded chiffonnier.

All the china does a-tremble—it anticipates its doom—
When those kittens do a-scamper round and round my dining-room.
You can almost hear the sideboard give a moan and cry "Alas!"
When the leader goes a cropper and brings down a row of glass.

Then to see them climb the curtains is enough to kill a saint;
Little rips they are for certain—those they manufacture ain't;
For the lace is all in tatters, and they poke their little heads
Through the hangings at the window, which their claws reduce to shreds.

When the poet's pains are on me, and my brain is on the rack,
They've a habit of a-lighting with a jump upon my back.
Playing with pens and paper is a thing at which I wink,
But they might abstain from fishing with their fore-paws in the ink.

They have pulled out all the stuffing from my best morocco suite,
All my carpets have been ruined by their scratching little feet;
But I do not mind the damage, though it grieves my better-half,
For the world has made me wretched, and my kittens make me laugh.

THE AUTOMATIC WOMAN.

SAIDEE V. MILNE.

AH! sure thin, love is bloind; fur whin Oi courted me Mary Ann, Oi could sa no blimish in hur; an, indade, she was butiful. Hur oyes were loike sassers o' buttermilk wid little blue daisies floatin' round in the middle uv 'em. Oi hurd someone say she'd a cast in one uv thim. "But," sez Oi, "the whoiles she'll be *castin'* it at me it's verra becomin'."

Hur hair was the same illigant shade as the wing uv a rid raven. Hur figure was that nate soize, that one avenin' hur father comin' intil the room, bein' rather avarse to me, Oi jist got round the ither soide uv hur, an' was niver sane at all a bit.

Oi bothered me brain fur wakes a-carvin' out a bit uv poetry, one varse uv which Oi've still in me memory:

"Me Mary Ann's handsome, she is;
One oye turns out like her toes,
But the ither is foinely balanced, ye say,
Fur that squints in to hur nose.
Hur hair is a rid as a brick,
Hur face is that same color, too;
An' hur mouth at the karners most touches hur ears,
The whoiles she'll be smoilin' at you."

Somehow, Mary Ann didn't appraciate me poetical talent, fur many a day she'd not spake wid me afther.

Well, bedad! it was the fourth wake afther we was married (Oi'm sure it was the fourth, fur it was that uv Tim McCarthy, an' there was Judy O'Flynn, an' Michael Reilly, an' Jerry O'Connell, that all doid afore that). As Oi said, it was the fourth wake, that a friend plucked me by the coat, an' sez he, "Faith! it's the twitches she has bad."

"Who?" sez Oi.

"Sure," sez he, "it's bloind yiz are, if ye're not knowin' yer woife has the twitches."

"Ah!" sez Oi, "it's a way she has o' makin' plizint faces to amuse me loike."

"But," sez he, "it's not loikely she'd be makin' uv 'em to the corpse; look at hur now."

An' sure enough, there was me Mary Ann trimmin' the candles at poor Tim's head, an' goin' thru awful contortions o' features. Thin it was fur the first Oi realized the affliction that was upon me, an' be gorra! I was taken spachless.

"Doan't be afther takin' on now," sez me friend, "Oi'd not been spakin' uv it had Oi not a cure. Sure, me sister's by had 'em worse nor hur, an' he was cured by a music-box."

"A music-box," sez Oi.

"Yis," sez he, "it's the best narve soother it's bin me luck to mate wid."

Well, it was the best uv me nixt wake's wages Oi spint on a music-box, and, saints save me! it was the bane uv me loife. The thing was kept squakin' from mornin' till night, an' all the difference it made in me woife's twitches was, that they kep' toime to the music. The nabors came runnin' in to say the livin' curiosity, an' niver a dacint male did Oi get, an' the house was at sixes an' sevens, so taken up was me consort wid her musical divarsions.

One day as Oi was ridin' home on me cart Oi was struck all of a heap wid a new idee.

"Ah!" sez Oi, "it's an ill wind blows nobody good. Wid the help o' the Vargin Oi'll turn this to a speculation."

Thru to me word nixt day on me front dure was a card which read: "Tin Cints to say Mary Ann Twitch to Music."

Sure that was a lucky hit, fur Oi had soon capital enough to start wid Mary Ann on the road, an' a big success she was. We appeared in the big cities all over the country, till at last we came to New York. Bedad! that's the place for an appraciative audyence. So touched was they by the harmonial musical twitchin', that one by one they all left the teater before

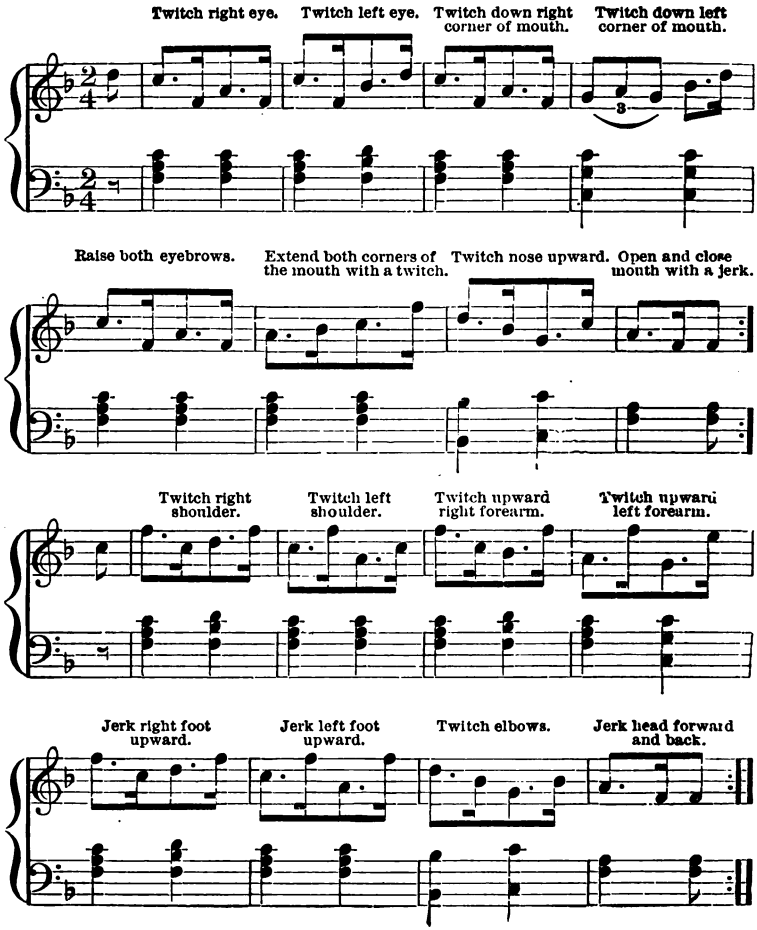
we was half thru, and nixt day Mayor Hewitt had blagards put up all over, "Positively Mary Ann's last appearance in the city."

It was about this toime me heart was broke intoirely, fur me poor Mary Ann doid on me. It was as plisint a funeral as could be expected under the sarkumstances, for Oi had lost me companion an' me bizness. Sure, Oi gave her a dacent wake. "An'," sez Oi, "Oi'll give a big lump at once to Father Rooney to pray hur out uv purgatory; fur," sez Oi, "she's had the twitches long enough, poor darlint." Which same Oi did, an' Oi gave him twinty-five cints, bedad!

Ah! but it's a fertile brain has Patrick Mahoney—that same's mesilf—for Oi had made in a few wakes an Automatic Woman, the livin' image uv me Mary Ann, wid jints an' springs an' wires, an' a music-box insoide, which same Oi prisint before yez to-night, not quoite, me friends, so good as the original (which Oi wish it had been yere privilege to say), but a rale parefect imitation.

[*Here the reader may seat himself, as stiffly as possible, in a chair. An appropriate wig, or other costuming, may be added for effect. Music, by piano, or music-box, if preferred. Air, "Money Musk," or similar melody. After sitting rigidly a moment, commence by twitching one eye, then the other, later the different muscles of the face, the shoulders, arms, and feet, till all are in motion. Beat a graceful retreat, and you are sure to leave the audience in convulsions of laughter.*

The movements should all be given with a jerk. They may be repeated, growing faster and faster, and then let the machine appear to run down, jerks and rests, in both movements and music.]


Twitch right eye.
Twitch left eye.
Twitch down right corner of mouth.
Twitch down left corner of mouth.
Raise both eyebrows.
Extend both corners of the mouth with a twitch.
Twitch nose upward.
Open and close mouth with a jerk.
Twitch right shoulder.
Twitch left shoulder.
Twitch upward right forearm.
Twitch upward left forearm.
Jerk right foot upward.
Jerk left foot upward.
Twitch elbows.
Jerk head forward and back.

"KISS ME, MAMMA, I CAN'T SLEEP."

THE child was so sensitive, so like that little shrinking plant that curls at a breath and shuts its heart from the light. The only beauties she possessed were an exceedingly transparent skin and the most mournful, large blue eyes.

I had been trained by a very stern, strict, conscientious mother, but I was a hardy plant, rebounding after every shock. Misfortune could not daunt, though discipline trained me. I fancied, alas! that I must go through the same routine with this delicate creature, so one day when she had displeased me exceedingly by repeating an offence, I was determined to punish her severely. I was very serious all day, and upon sending her to her little couch I said: "Now, my daughter, to punish you and show you how very, very naughty you have been, I shall not kiss you to-night."

She stood looking at me, astonishment personified, with her great, mournful eyes wide open—I suppose she had forgotten her misconduct till then—and I left her with big tears dropping down her cheeks and her little red lips quivering.

Presently, I was sent for. "Oh, mamma, you will kiss me; I can't go to sleep if you don't!" she sobbed, every tone of her voice trembling; and she held out her little hands.

Now came the struggle between love and what I falsely termed duty. My heart said give her the kiss of peace; my stern nature urged me to persist in my conviction that I must impress the fault upon her mind. That was the way I had been trained, till I was a most submissive child; and I remembered how I had often thanked my mother since for her straightforward course.

I knelt by the bedside. "Mother can't kiss you, Ellen," I whispered, though every word choked me. Her hand touched mine; it was very hot, but I attributed it to her excitement. She turned her little grieving face to the wall. I

blamed myself as the fragile form shook with self-suppressed sobs, but telling her, "Mother hopes little Ellen will learn to mind her after this," left the room for the night. Alas! in my desire to be severe, I forgot to be forgiving.

It must have been twelve o'clock when I was awakened by my nurse. Apprehensive, I ran eagerly to the child's chamber; I had had a fearful dream. Ellen did not know me. She was sitting up, crimsoned from forehead to throat; her eyes so bright that I drew back aghast at their glances.

From that night a raging fever drank up her life, and what think you was the incessant plaint that poured into my anguished heart? "Oh, kiss me, mamma—do kiss me; I can't go to sleep. You'll kiss your little Ellen, mamma, won't you? I can't go to sleep. I won't be naughty if you'll only kiss me? Oh, kiss me, dear mamma, I can't go to sleep."

Holy little angel! she did go to sleep one gray morning and she never woke again,—never. Her hand was locked in mine and all my veins grew icy with its gradual chill. Faintly the light faded out of the beautiful eyes; whiter and whiter grew the tremulous lips. She never knew me, but with her last breath she whispered, "I will be good, mamma, if you'll only kiss me."

Kiss her! God knows how passionate but unavailing were my kisses upon her cheek and lips after that fatal night. God knows how wild were my prayers that she might know, if but only once, that I kissed her. God knows how I would have yielded up my very life could I have asked forgiveness of that sweet child.

Well, grief is unavailing now! She lies in her little tomb. There is a marble urn at her head and a rosebush at her feet; there grow sweet summer flowers; there waves the gentle grass; there birds sing their matins and vespers; there the blue sky smiles down to-day, and there lies buried the freshness of my heart.

A GRADUATING ESSAY.

H. C. DODGE.

DEAR FRIENDS: My essay is to-night
On "Woman's Future Sphere."
(I wonder how I look in white.
My sash feels rather queer.)

Of late years only woman threw
Her shackles off and rose.
(Oh, dear! I never had a shoe
So pinch and hurt my toes.)

No longer slave to selfish man
She will new heights explore.
(Suppose they recognize my fan
I borrowed from next door.)

Her brain, once dulled, is active now,
Her tongue, once stilled, can speak.
(Before the glass I learned my bow;
It took me just one week.)

Armed with her knowledge and its strength
She will the world o'ercome.
(My gloves have quite a stylish length,
One's bursted in the thumb.)

Man will, yea, must acknowledge that
We women lead in all.
(I'm thinking if a bigger hat
Will be the thing next fall.)

Dear friends, adieu! Our future sphere
I know will be immense!
(Just look at my bouquets—I fear
Pa'll growl at the expense.)

COUNTRY COURTSHIP.

W. D. KELLY.

DRIVING the cows from the upper meadow—
Beauty and Brindle and Bess—
Now in the sunlight, now in the shadow,
And now in the wind's caress.
With song as sweet as at morn the starling
Is wont to the skies to trill,
Mollie, the farmer's daughter and darling,
Comes tripping adown the hill.

Purple and black are the braided tresses
Her dainty temples that crown;
Light is her step on the sward it presses,
As fall of the thistle down.
The squirrels peek from the wayside hedges,
As the maiden moves along,
And count it chief of their privileges
To list to her jocund song.

Down where the alders and slender rushes
Border the rivulet's banks,
And the widened sweep of the water gushes
Under a bridge's broad planks;
Whistling a love-song, in broken snatches,
His hat pushed back from his brows,

Robin, the miller, awaits and watches
  For the coming of the cows.

Up to their knees in the stream, the cattle
  Drink deep of its crystal flow;
Little they care for the lovers' prattle
  Or the bliss the twain may know;
Their heaving sides with their draughts distended.
  They enter the path again,
And crop the grasses, with heads low bended,
  On either side of the lane.

The shadows deepen; the dew is sprinkling
  With diamonds all the meads;
And faint and far, in the distance tinkling,
  The sound of the bells recedes.
Still on the bridge where the water glistens,
  As the moonlight on it falls,
The miller talks, and the maiden listens,
  But the cows are in their stalls.

A SIMPLE SIGN.

IT was in a grocer's window that she saw a simple sign,
  And she stopped and slowly read it while her blue eyes seemed to shine.
Then with scornful lips she murmured, as she tossed her pretty hat,
"How I wish that men were labeled with a good, plain sign like that."
So when she had passed, I ventured near that favored grocer's shop,
And espied this simple legend: "This Corn is Warranted to Pop."

SHE SHOWED HIM STARS.

FOR every shooting star, he claimed a kiss.
She, seeming coy, at first demurred to this;
But he, persisting, would not be denied,
When he at length a flying meteor spied.
And so, as evening grew apace, their eyes
Oft scanned the glittering aspect of the skies;
And when a darting star caught either's sight,
Nay, if by chance a star escaped his view,
She called his wondering fancy to it, too.
When intervals seemed long between each hug,
She called him on a passing lightning bug;
And, ever taxing her ingenious mind,
Her ready wit enabled her to find
More shooting stars in three short fleeting hours
Than would compose whole meteoric showers;
But when she did her last pretence exhaust,
And was about to yield her cause as lost,
She saw a switchman's lantern circling swing,
And got the youth down to a steady thing.

THE MILLER'S MAID.

FRED EMERSON BROOKS.

[By permission of the author.]

NATURE, ever fickle jade,
Squandered treasure on the maid
Of the mill;
Gave her eyes of such rare blue
That her soul kept peeping through
"Will-he-nill."
On his handsome chestnut-brown

Sat the heir of half the town,
Reining in his horse, enchanted with the vision on the hill.
Fresh from college halls was he;
Fell in love? Well, let me see—
But the story's told much sweeter by the maiden of the mill.

"But he knew not what to say
So he asked of me the way
To the mill;
It was just to make me speak,
For it stood there on the creek
'Neath the hill!
It is difficult to frown
On such loving eyes and brown,
So I raised my arm and pointed just a moment down the hill;
All he did was stand and stare
At my plump arms white and bare,
Till I had to doubt the handsome fellow's business at the mill.

"'Since you have no grist to grind,
Why so anxious, sir, to find
Father's mill?
But the mill you'll never see
While you stand and gaze at me—
Think you will?'
Then I thought I heard him say,
As he threw a kiss this way:
'I think I see the building at the bottom of the hill.'
But I threw his kisses back,
While I bade him get a sack
And take his many kisses to be ground up at the mill.

"Now he brings a grist each day
Which he never takes away
From the mill.
When I ask the reason why
He will smile and make reply:
'When you will!'
It is plain as plain can be,
By his grist he's meaning me,
For my heart is ground up finer than the corn within the mill,
And he says his gold he'll share
For the gold that's in my hair!
Will I wed him? Well, I'm human, and I rather think I will!"

ONCE.

W. L. LAMPTON.

COME, listen, little boys and girls, while I a tale relate
About a little boy named Tom, whose age was almost eight.
Tom was a headstrong kind of boy, who thought it jolly fun
To scare his mother half to death by blowing in a gun.

One day a stranger came that way, as strangers oft had done.
But this one left behind the door a double-barreled gun.
"Ha, ha!" quoth Tom, the naughty boy, "I never saw one such;
If single-barrels make such sport, this should make twice as much."

So Tommy took the double gun straight to his mother fast;
"It isn't loaded, maw," he yelled, and blew a mighty blast.
And Tommy! Where is Tommy now; a halo 'round his head?
Not much. It wasn't loaded, just as little Tommy said.

DISCONTENT.

SARAH ORNE JEWETT.

DOWN in a field, one day in June, the flowers all bloomed together,
Save one who tried to hide herself, and drooped that pleasant weather.
A robin who had soared too high, and felt a little lazy,
Was resting near a buttercup, who wished she were a daisy.
For daisies grow so trig and tall; she always had a passion
For wearing frills about her neck in just the daisies' fashion.
And buttercups must always be the same old tiresome color,
While daisies dress in gold and white, although their gold is duller.
"Dear robin," said this sad young flower, "perhaps you'd not mind trying
To find a nice white frill for me, some day, when you are flying."
"You silly thing!" the robin said; "I think you must be crazy!
I'd rather be my honest self than any made-up daisy.
You're nicer in your own bright gown, the little children love you.
Be the best buttercup you can and think no flower above you.
Though swallows leave me out-of-sight, we'd better keep our places;
Perhaps the world would all go wrong with one too many daisies.
Look bravely up into the sky, and be content with knowing
That God wished for a buttercup, just here where you are growing."

REPENTANCE.

O DE'! O de'! I'se out of bwef—
  I fought I heard a boogger!
Curtain wustled—sca't me most to def—
  I'se been a-takin' soogar!

But oh, me! did want one lump mo'
  I stood up so an' listened,
An' so me twep' a-twoss 'e flo'—
  I dess nobody listened—

An' dot it; 'en me 'unned. 'Hat's 'at?
  I fought I heard a gnawin'!
Teep 'till! I fink it was a wat,
  Or maybe dwoun-moles tlawin!

It's Sam! Now, Sam, doe wite away—
  You s'an't see in pottit!
I don't tare 'hat you do an' say,—
  Nobody saw me dot it.

Aw! Sammy, say! Say, Sammy! aw!
  Me dive you ev'y playfin'—
'Hat 'at you dot all down you' jaw?
  Loots lite 'hat's on my ap'n!

'Hat's 'at you dot stut up you' s'eeve?
  You needn't hide it neiver
You been a-stealin' I bereive,
  'E same as I have, eiver!

Aw, Sammy! 'hat would muvver say?
  Sammy, we bofe is thievers—
An' Dod can see as bwite as day,
  Down froo 'e dreen corn leavers.

I dess I'll fro' my lump out here,
  An' you fro' yours, too, bwuvver;
I dess we'd better say our pwayer,
  An' 'en doe in tell muvver!

THE LAND OF NOD.

LUCY M. BLINN.

DID you ever hear how Budge and Tod
  Took a flying trip to the Land of Nod?
They put on their nightgowns, climbed the stairs,
Mumbled their innocent, drowsy prayers,
Curled up in bed in a dimpled heap,
And in forty winks they were fast asleep!
Then the Dream-Man came, on a train of cars,
With moonbeam windows and wheels of stars;
The fires were lit by a comet queer,
And the Man in the Moon was engineer!
A seaweed cord held the engine bell,
Made from a ringing ocean shell;
The railroad track was a rainbow band
Reaching far over the sea and land.
And the ends of the road, I am gravely told,
Were built upon pots of shining gold!
"All aboard!"—and away went Budge and Tod,
Nightgowns and all, to the Land of Nod.

The cars were filled with a curious crew.
Sweet Baby Trix and the Wandering Jew,
Jack with his bean-stalk, the Giant Grim,
Little Miss Mincer and Uncle Tim,
Fairies and sprites, and brownies rare,
And mermaids wrapped in their yellow hair,

Sat side by side in the phantom cars
With moonbeam windows and wheels of stars!
On, on they sped through the silver sand
Of the beautiful streets of the Wonderland.
They stopped in a cloud for a drink of dew,
While the seashell rung and the whistle blew;
They gathered blossoms that never die,
That grew in the Land of the By-and-By,
And there, at the end of the route, I am told,
Our travelers found the pot of gold!
Then the Dream-Man brought little Budge and Tod,
Nightgowns and all, from the Land of Nod!

A QUEER BOY.

HE doesn't like study, it "weakens his eyes,"
But the "right sort" of book will insure a surprise.
Let it be about Indians, pirates, or bears,
And he's lost for the day to all mundane affairs;
By sunlight or gaslight his vision is clear.
Now, isn't that queer?

At thought of an errand, he's "tired as a hound,"
Very weary of life, and of "tramping around."
But if there's a band or a circus in sight,
He will follow it gladly from morning till night.
The showman will capture him, some day, I fear,
For he is so queer.

If there's work in the garden, his head "aches to split,"
And his back is so lame that he "can't dig a bit."
But mention baseball, and he's cured very soon;
And he'll dig for a woodchuck the whole afternoon.
Do you think he "plays possum?" He seems quite sincere;
But—isn't he queer.

THE REASON WHY.

MARY E. BRADLEY.

[By permission of the author.]

"WHEN I was at the party," said Betty (aged just four),
"A little girl fell off her chair, right down upon the floor;
And all the other little girls began to laugh, but me—
I didn't laugh a single bit," said Betty, seriously.
"Why not?" her mother asked her, full of delight to find
That Betty—bless her little heart—had been so sweetly kind.
"Why didn't you laugh, darling, or don't you like to tell?"
"I didn't laugh," said Betty, "'cause it was me that fell!"

PERITON'S RIDE.

MILLER HAGEMAN.

[This poem presents a scene at the Johnstown flood. A man on horse rides down the valley, warning the people to flee to the hills, but is himself overtaken and swept away by the flood.]

THE stream through the valley ran smoothly and still
To the sound of the spindle, the song of the mill.
The white dusty road at the foot of the ridge
Wound down by the brook that went under the bridge
As it drew out the thread of its low, drowsy tune,
Through the slow-gliding hours of the long afternoon,
Where set to the harp of the willow was heard

The soft liquid trill of the caroling bird.
But hark! through the valley whence cometh that sound
That rings on the answering mountains around
In echoing quicksteps that suddenly strike,
With a sharp, forging click down the old dusty pike?
Now near and still nearer it comes in its course!
'Tis the clattering hoof of a galloping horse,
As it rings sharply out on the long wooden bridge,
Where the road and the river wind under the ridge.
The child at its playthings starts up from the floor,
The fond mother listens at window and door,
As a rider shrieks by through that valley accurst:
"It's coming, it's coming! The dam has burst."

Hark! a low, hissing thunder rolls over the hills,
The water-course suddenly freshens and fills.
Great God! what is that on the top of the steep,
That rears on its haunches, that looms for a leap
On the edge of the chasm that yawns out below;
A skyburst of judgment, a vision of woe?
Like a sulphurous steed that, 'mid carnage and wreck,
Runs away with the loose reins of law on its neck,
From the loins of the cloud with a rush and a roar,
With the whirlwind behind it, the chasm before,
It sprang with a crash down its rocketing course,
A fabulous Centaur, half human, half horse,
That laughs and that weeps and that shrieks and that sobs,
That paws and that plunges, that boils with the throbs
Of the victims it tramples to death at its feet,
As onward, right on over stream, over street,
It scours in the pride of its maddening speed
Hard after the horseman—that dread liquid steed!—
Like the thunder that follows the flash of the scud,
As on raced the rider and on rushed the flood.

Hark! down through the gorge as the shadows grow deep,
With a long, sullen plunge o'er the shuddering steep,

As swift as a glacier that shoots through the snow,
It falls on the homes in the valley below.
It opens the tomb and it snatches its pride,
It shivers the glass in the hand of the bride,
It climbs with the child up the dark cottage stair,
It smothers the cry and it puts out the prayer,
It scales the tall crag as its loud crash goes by,
It snaps off the poplar that solemns the sky,
It churns up the town to a caldron of tears,
A swelter of horrors, piled up at the piers
Where the holocaust burns with the hot hasty hiss
Of the lips that so late said their soft parting kiss.
And faster and farther and still farther down,
As it hears in the distance town crash after town,
It calls to the steed in the valley below:
"With the wind for a driver I gain as I go.
Such a headstart as yours in so splendid a race
But sets for my feet a more furious pace,
But rowels my chest at each spur of the bank,
But whitens the foam on my glistening flank,
But rouses my mettle and maddens my blood,"
As on raced the rider and on rushed the flood.

Far down through the valley, deep folded in night,
In that race against time on they rush in their flight;
But though the brave horseman hath slacked not his speed,
Still faster it follows—that fleet liquid steed.
He hears it behind him just over the hill,
Its shadowless presence comes closer and chill.
He feels, as he looks back, its ominous breath,
As cold as the sweat on the forehead of death.
"I see it," he whispers, as toward him it sped,
With its stars looking out like the eyes of its dead;
But still to the road on, right onward, he kept,
Though that wingèd-grown steed at his saddle-bags leapt,
And all down the homestretch the loud echoes rang,
As after the horseman the hippogriff sprang;

And a crash of applause on both sides of the steep
Went down with the trees at the waters' high leap,
Where necked for the finish together they scud,
As on raced the rider and on rushed the flood.

"To the hills, to the h——," he shrieks out of the spray,
But the water had washed out that last word away,
As under the wave on the throne of a king,
He sank to his death with his steed on the spring.
His sweepstake is honor, his headstart is sure,
That son of a rich man who died for the poor.
Carve him, strained at a speed that shall cheat his last sleep,
With his hand on the rein and his horse on the leap,
Where, stiffened to stone, though the flood hath run dry,
He shall ride against time, as the ages roll by.

AT THE CONCERT.

JAMES LINDSAY GORDON.

YES, I s'pose it's real music—it's a mighty heap o' sound,
With the treble way up yonder, an' the bass down underground,
With the demi-semi-quavers an' the tinklin' o' the keys,
An' a fuss like wind a-roarin' through the branches o' the trees.
An' ye say that Wagner wrote it, an' ter hear it is a boon?
But somehow the feller never seems to overtake the chune,
Though his fingers run like lightnin', an' he twists upon his stool,
An' ruffles up his hair until he looks an orful fool;
An' somehow I miss the feelin' that I always uster feel,

That was sweet until it hurt me f'om mer head down ter mer
heel,—
That 'u'd make mer eyes git misty an' mer mouth ter twitch
an' smile,—
When I listened ter Mirandy playin' "Mary uv Argyle."

Why, ter hear Mirandy playin' was ter see the water run
Like a streak o' shinin' silver jes' a-sparklin' in the sun,
An' up above the medder ye could hear a thousan' birds
A-singin' jes' as easy as ye hear me talk these words;
Ye could fairly smell the early blooms upon the apple trees,
An' ye owned a fine plantation an' much money as ye please.
Lord, how ye loved yer neighbor, an' never wisht no harm
Ter him about the lawin' 'cause his fence run on yer farm.
An' the milk o' human kindness kep' a-flowin' far an' free,
An' ev'rythin' about the world was like it ought ter be,
Tell ye kinder seemed in heaven, peart an' happy all the
while
That ye listened ter Mirandy playin' "Mary uv Argyle."

Well, I s'pose I am old-fashioned, an' it wouldn' hardly do
Fer him ter play the music that I uster cotton to.
These town folks wouldn' keer ter hear about the "hunter's
horn,"
Nor 'bout the mavis singin' out "his love-song ter the
morn;"
So I'll set an' listen quiet while the feller bangs away,
An' I'll low that his pianner beats a injine any day;
But it ain't mer style o' music—an' with all mer due respex
Ye can say ter Mr. Wagner, when ye chance ter see him nex',
That the loudes' fuss ain't allers what is certain sure ter please,
Nor the best musicianer the one that tries ter bust the keys;
An' though I have no doubt but he's a social sort o' man,
I wouldn' walk a square ter hear the bes' thing f'om his han';
But oh, if she was livin' yit, I'd foot it forty mile
Jes' ter listen ter Mirandy playin' "Mary uv Argyle."

"THAT CALF."

TO the yard by the barn came the farmer one morn,
And calling the cattle, he said,
While they trembled with fright: "Now which of you last night
Shut the barn door while I was abed?"
Each one of them all shook his head.

Now the little calf Spot she was down in the lot,
And the way the rest talked was a shame;
For no one, night before, saw her shut up the door,
But they said that she did all the same;
For they always made her take the blame.

Said the horse Dapple Gray: "I was not up that way
Last night, as I now recollect;"
And the bull, passing by, tossed his horns very high,
And said, "Let who may here object,
I say 'tis that calf I suspect!"

Then out spoke the cow: "It is terrible now
To accuse honest folks of such tricks."
Said the cock in the tree, "I'm sure 'twasn't me;"
And the sheep all cried, "Bah! [There were six.]
That calf's got herself in a fix!"

"Why, of course, we all knew 'twas the wrong thing to do,"
Said the chickens. "Of course," said the cat.
"I suppose," said the mule, "some folks think me a fool,
But I'm not quite so simple as that;
But that calf never knows what she's at."

Just that moment the calf, who was always the laugh
And jest of the yard, came in sight.
"Did you shut my barn door?" asked the farmer once more.
"I did, sir; I closed it last night,"
Said the calf, "and I thought that was right."

Then each one shook his head. "She'll catch it," they said;
"Serve her right for her meddlesome way!"
Said the farmer, "Come here, little 'bossy,' my dear;
You have done what I cannot repay,
And your fortune is made from to-day.

"For a wonder, last night, I forgot that door quite;
And if you had not shut it so neat,
And my colts had slipped in, and gone right to the bin,
And got what they ought not to eat,
They'd have foundered themselves on wheat."

Then each hoof of them began loudly to bawl;
The very mule smiled; the cock crew.
"Little Spotty, my dear, you're a favorite here,"
They cried; "we all said it was you;
We were so glad to give you your due!"
But the calf answered knowingly, "Boo!"

MEETING AT NIGHT—PARTING AT MORNING.

ROBERT BROWNING.

THE gray sea and the long black land,
And the yellow half-moon large and low;
And the startled little waves that leap
In fiery ringlets from their sleep,
As I gain the cove with pushing prow,
And quench its speed i' the slushy sand.

Then a mile of warm, sea-scented beach;
Three fields to cross till a farm appears;
A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch
And blue spurt of a lighted match,

And a voice less loud, through joys and fears,
Than the two hearts beating each to each!

* * * * *

Round the cape of a sudden came the sea,
And the sun looked over the mountain's rim,
And straight was a path of gold for him,
And the need of a world of men for me.

A COSMOPOLITAN WOMAN.

SAM WALTER FOSS.

SHE went round and asked subscriptions
For the heathen black Egyptians,
And the Terra del Fuegians,
She did;
For the tribes round Athabasca,
And the men of Madagascar,
And the poor souls of Alaska,
So she did.
She longed, she said, to buy
Jelly cake and jam and pie
For the anthropophagi,
So she did.

Her heart ached for the Australians
And the Borriobooli-Ghalians,
And the poor dear Amahagger,
Yes, it did;
And she loved the black Numidian,
And the ebon Abyssinian,
And the charcoal-colored Guinean,
Oh, she did.

And she said she'd cross the seas
With a ship of bread and cheese
For those starving chimpanzees,
Sure, she did.

How she loved the cold Norwegian
And the poor half-melted Feejeean,
And the dear Melucca Islander,
She did;
She sent pie and canned tomatoe
To the tribes beyond the equator,
But her husband ate potatoe,
So he did;
The poor helpless, homeless thing
(My voice falters as I sing)
Tied his clothes up with a string,
Yes, he did.

YESTERDAY.

EDITH K. PERCY.

SAID our bright-eyed boy, with curls of gold:
"I'll be a bachelor when I'm old,
And always stay with mamma and you—
As sure as sure and true as true."
But he fell a prey to Cupid's dart,
For tiny Bess stole his tiny heart.
Next day he announced with solemn air—
"He loved dear Bessie—he did, so there!
Bessie was pretty, Bessie was good—
He'd marry Bessie,—yes, he would."
Reminded of what he had said before,
He pondered a moment the problem o'er,
Then softly said in his bashful way,
"I hadn't seen Bessie yesterday."

THAT KISS OF MARTHY'S.

EBEN E. REXFORD.

[By permission of the author.]

WHEN I went a-courtin' Marthy
I was poor as poor could be,
But that didn't set her agin me,
For she had faith in me;
She knew I had grit an' courage,
An' wasn't the kind to shirk,
An' she was ready an' willin'
To do her share o' work.

I remember our weddin'-mornin',
An' how she said to me:
"You're poor an' I'm poor, Robert,
That's easy enough to see,
That is, as some folks reckon;
But our hearts are rich in love,
An' we two'll pull together
An' trust in the Lord above."

Then she reached up an' kissed me,
An' said, as she did this,
"There's always more where that come from,
An' there's help sometimes in a kiss."
I tell you what it is, sir.
I felt as strong agin
After that kiss she give me,
An' I jest laid out to win.

An' I did it. We've money a plenty
An' the comforts it can give;
We've a home an' we've got each other,
An' a few more years to live.

Whenever my hands get weary
  I'd think of the woman at home,
An' somehow 'twould make work easy
  An' light till night-time'd come.

I tell you that kiss of Marthy's
  Was better than bags of gold.
There's riches some folks can't reckon
  An' things that don't grow old.
I shouldn't ha' been, without it,
  The man that I've got to be,
An' Marthy shall have the credit
  For the help she's been to me.

GLEN ALLEN'S DAUGHTER.

THE Lord of Glen Allen came home from afar,
  With his name high renowned in the annals of war;
With honor's fair crown from the strife he had come;
The chief and his clans were gathering home.

Wide open was the hall to admit the long train,
The chief had returned to his mansion again;
Then back from his shoulders his locks the chief tossed,
With proud step and slow the stone threshold he crossed,

When bounding to meet him his daughter came nigh,
With a smile on her lip and a tear in her eye.
"Oh, welcome, my daughter. My heart doth rejoice
At the bound of thy footstep, and the sound of thy voice.

"But here stands my kinsman, Clan Lair, and his band,
Who craves as a suitor the gift of thy hand."
Then pale grew her cheek, and right lowly she bent,
And quick on the chieftain her dark glances she sent.

Right courteous his homage, and graceful his bow,
But fierce was his aspect and dark was his brow.
Then spake Lord Glen Allen, and they in the hall
Were silent and speechless and listening all:

"Thrice happy this moment. Through Eglantine fair
The proud force of Glen Allen unites with Clan Lair.
My worst foe is taken, the wheel is now turned,
But dear was the prize that the victory earned.

"Stern fortune relented; now all are subdued,
And the hands of Glen Allen much blood hath embued;
Yet one have I taken, brought home with his life;
The rest were all slain in the battle's wild strife.

"Ho, there, my brave rear-guards! Clan Lennox forth lead!
Who can succor him now must be gallant, indeed."
Then forth to the midst the young captive was led;
High and proud were his glances, and firm was his tread.

Deep red were his locks that no helmet enchained,
And the plaid of his garments was bloody and stained.
Then stood Lord Glen Allen and fastened his gaze
On the form of the victim, and mocking he says:

"Where now thy proud forces, so valliant and brave?
Why are they not here their great chieftain to save?
Your conquests are over, your battles are done;
Clan Lennox shall die at the set of the sun."

On his long-cherished vengeance so deeply intent,
No look on his daughter the chieftain had sent,
Whose features the color of life had forsaken,
And her form like a reed by the river was shaken.

Then spake Father Egmont, a councilor sage:
"When the battle is over, restrained should be rage;

In the turmoil of carnage no mercy is shown;
Then let young Clan Lennox return to his own."

"Nay, nay, Father Egmont, thy speech is in vain.
Should the wolf be dismissed to the forest again?
Nay, nay, my all in the flames I would see
Ere Clan Lair is refused, or Clan Lennox set free!"

Then spake all the kinsmen and earnestly prayed
That against young Clan Lennox his wrath might be stayed.
Then stood Lord Glen Allen; his anger raged high,
Wrath flamed from his features and flashed from his eye.

When suddenly forward fair Eglantine sprung
And her arms round the neck of her father she flung:
"Oh, grant, noble father, this boon I demand,
Take back this young chief to his own native land!

"Oh, grant me this favor, concede to my prayer,
And ask me no longer to wed with Clan Lair!"
"Wouldst thou ask me the life of this captive to spare?
Perchance thou wouldst like his wild fortunes to share?"

"Aye, that would I gladly," the maiden replied.
Then his outbursting anger all curbing defied;
He strongly and fiercely repulsed her embrace,
And from her caresses averted his face.

"Set free a vile viper, so fearful to crush!
'Twas enough for his child that Glen Allen should blush!"
"Nay, sire, but spare him, and I'll solemnly swear
If Clan Lennox goes free, I will marry Clan Lair!"

"Ah, that shalt thou do, and again I declare it,
And here in the home of my fathers I swear it!"
Then forth from his girdle his poniard he drew
And quick at the chief of Clan Lennox he flew.

Then paused. "Holy Mary! How fearful my mood;
Wellnigh had my dagger drunken his blood.
Away with him quickly, I've sworn he shall die,
And the lips of Glen Allen ne'er uttered a lie."

Then turned Lord Glen Allen. His daughter was gone;
The long marble hall was deserted and lone.
A vassal was summoned. "My daughter bid here,
I would that she now in my presence appear."

Long gone was the vassal, and thence he returned,
And deep in the heart of Glen Allen it burned.
"The castle was traversed from turret to cell,
But no trace of the lady doth anywhere dwell."

Slow passed the long hours, and sunk was the sun,
And the shadows of evening came wearily on;
When forth from his castle slow wandered the lord,
Down by the valley, the glen, and the ford,

Then stood Lord Glen Allen, his glance roaming wide;
His child on the brink of a hill cliff he spied.
"Why, Eglantine, wander so rash and so wild?
Come back, my fair daughter, return to me, child!"

"Nay, nay!" laughed the maiden, "all danger I'll dare,
But I'll never return to be bride of Clan Lair."
Then hastened Glen Allen, and faster yet still
As he hurried around the broad base of the hill.

But she fled at his coming, and only replied:
"I'll never return of Clan Lair to be bride."
Then hastened Glen Allen, and faster yet now,
As clammy and cold stood the drops on his brow.

"Return, my fair daughter, my old heart to cheer;
There is none that will cherish or hold thee so dear.

Return, and I promise to grant thee thy prayer
And ask thee no longer to wed with Clan Lair."

His voice pierced the blackness, the deep silence broke,
And the echoes that slept in the mountains awoke;
There came from the mountain the peabrook's wild scream,
And shapes flitted by like the shades of a dream.

"My daughter, my daughter!" arose his wild cry;
But the peabrook's shrill whistle alone gave reply.
"Bless my sight but once more, and Clan Lennox shall live,
And thy hand on the morrow to *him* I will give!"

But the night-watches hasten, and still through the gale,
The chieftain walks ever, all breathless and pale;
For the fall of the snowflakes has darkened the air
As a winding sheet, white for the corpse of the fair.

When morn was approaching, near down by the shore,
Still stood the brave heart that light bounded before;
For stretched on a couch of snow, hoarfrost, and hail,
Lay the chieftain's fair daughter, all breathless and pale;

And on her fair brow his hot kisses he pressed,
And madly and wildly her clay he caressed,
And frantically prayed her to smile as before;
But the lips of that maiden will never smile more.

RACE PREJUDICE.

I GRINDA de org' and I plays de fid'
And I sella de ripea banan';
No steala, no rob, I never did,
But I work like de honesta man.
I buy me de monk' wid de leeta red hat,

And I tie 'im a string by de neck,
I grabs de org' and I t'inka me dat
I maka de mon' by de peck.
I play de tune from "Il Trovatore"
And "Tom by His Mudda He Stick,"
And de monk' he climb up to de seconda story,
Where de leeta gal gib 'im de nick.
I worka t'ree day and I maka four dol',
And I feel me so rich like de king,
When—*sacra diavolo, estrito chrystal!*
De Irish kid cutta de string.
Like—what you call 'im? Ah, yes, de blue streak,
De monk' break away and was hid.
I find 'im no mo', and I go busted dat week,
Dat's why I hatea de Irisha kid.

HUSKING SONG.

A. W. BELLAW.

["Huck-u" and "Uhu" are plantation gutturals for "No" and "Yes" respectively.]

'POSSUM mighty nice fer fryin',
Squir'l ain't half so sadisfyin',
Huck-u.
Woodchuck roas'in' suits a feller,
Hongry nig' got pow'ful smeller,
Uhu.

Pile grow slow when co'n all nubbin'.
Pete an' Sally ain't dey lubbin'!
Uhu.
Dey done gone fer 'million plunkin',
Don't go back on yaller punkin,
Huck-u.

Mokes don't run fum sweet yams bilin',
Dey keeps lots ob grub fum spilin',
Uhu.
Huskin' times are jolly, certain.
Jake an' Clindy, quit yo' flirtin'!
Uhu.

'Tober frost it sweeten de 'simmon;
Mush ain't bad in milk crock swimmin',
Huck-u.
Darky eatin' big sweet 'taters,
Got a mouf lak alligators,
Uhu.

Pile grow'n' slow, an' w'at's de reason?
Paul an' Phebe, quit yo' squeezin'!
Uhu.
Kissin' yeahs de gals am findin',
All de boys dey isn't mindin',
Huck-u.

Folks can't work much dat am squealin',
Scar' de bats fum de ole bahn ceilin',
Uhu.
Keep de yeahs a-whoopin' an' flyin',
Job an' Lucy, quit yo' sighin'!
Uhu.

Grub-time bell'll soon be tappin',
'Possum sop ain't no bad lappin',
Huck-u.
Ole Abe Bud'll chune his fiddle,
Fus' par' jine, up 'n' down de middle,
Uhu.
Dancin's fine, an' so is grubbin',
Rufe an' Riney, you'se too lubbin'!
Uhu.

THE BISHOP ORDERS HIS TOMB.

ROBERT BROWNING.

DRAW round my bed. Is Anselm keeping back ?
Nephews—sons mine—Ah God, I know not! Well—
She, men would have to be your mother once,
Old Gandolf envied me, so fair she was!
What's done is done, and she is dead beside,
Dead long ago, and I am bishop since,
And as she died so must we die ourselves,
And thence ye may perceive the world's a dream.
Life—how and what is it ? As here I lie
In this state-chamber, dying by degrees,
Hours and long hours in the dead night, I ask
"Do I live ? Am I dead ?" Peace, peace seems all.
Saint Praxed's ever was the church for peace;
And so, about this tomb of mine. I fought
With tooth and nail to save my niche, ye know.
Old Gandolf cozened me, despite my care;
Shrewd was that snatch from out the corner south
He graced his carrion with, God curse the same!
Yet still my niche is not so cramped but thence
One sees the pulpit on the epistle-side,
And somewhat of the choir, those silent seats,
And up in the aëry dome where live
The angels, and a sunbeam's sure to lurk;
And I shall fill my slab of basalt there,
And 'neath my tabernacle take my rest,
With those nine columns round me, two and two,
The odd one at my feet where Anselm stands;
Peach-blossom marble all, the rare, the ripe
As fresh-poured red wine of a mighty pulse.
Old Gandolf, with his paltry onion stone,
Put me where I may look at him! True peach,

Rosy and flawless. How I earned the prize!
Draw close; that conflagration of my church.
What then? So much was saved if aught were missed!
My sons, ye would not be my death? Go dig
The white-grape vineyard where the oil-press stood,
Drop water gently till the surface sink,
And if ye find—Ah God, I know not, I!—
Bedded in store of rotten fig-leaves soft,
And corded up in a tight olive-frail,
Some lump, ah God, of lapis lazuli,
Big as a Jew's head cut off at the nape,
Blue as a vein o'er the Madonna's breast—
Sons, all have I bequeathed you, villas, all,
That brave Frascati villa with its bath,
So, let the blue lump poise between my knees,
Like God the Father's globe on both his hands
Ye worship in the Jesu Church so gay,
For Gandolf shall not choose but see and burst!
Swift as a weaver's shuttle fleet our years.
Man goeth to the grave, and where is he?
Did I say basalt for my slab, sons? Black—
'Twas ever antique black I meant! How else
Shall ye contrast my frieze to come beneath?
The bass-relief in bronze ye promised me,
Those Pans and nymphs yet wot of, and perchance
Some tripod, thyrsus, with a vase or so,
The Saviour at his sermon on the mount,
Saint Praxed in a glory, another Pan,
And Moses with the tables—but I know
Ye mark me not! What do they whisper thee,
Child of my soul, Anselm? Ah, ye hope
To revel down my villas while I gasp,
Bricked o'er with beggar's mouldy travertine
Which Gandolf from his tomb-top chuckles at!
Nay, boys, ye love me—all of jasper, then!
'Tis jasper ye stand pledged to, lest I grieve
My bath must needs be left behind alas!

One block, pure green as a pistachio nut.
There's plenty jasper somewhere in the world—
And have I not Saint Praxed's ear to pray
Horses for ye, and brown Greek manuscripts?
That's if ye carve my epitaph aright,
Choice Latin, picked phrase, Tully's every word,
No gaudy ware like Gandolf's second line.
Tully, my masters? Ulpian serves his need!
And then how I shall lie through centuries,
And hear the blessed mutter of the mass,
And see God made and eaten all day long,
And feel the steady candle flame and taste
Good, strong, thick, stupefying incense smoke!
For as I lie here, hours of the dead night,
Dying in state and by such slow degrees,
I fold my arms as if they clasped a crook,
And stretch my feet forth straight as stone can point,
And let the bedclothes, for a mortcloth, drop
Into great laps and folds of sculptor's work;
And as yon tapers dwindle, and strange thoughts
Grow, with a certain humming in my ears,
About the life before I lived this life,
And this life, too, popes, cardinals, and priests,
Saint Praxed at his sermon on the mount,
Your tall pale mother with her talking eyes,
And new-found agate urns as fresh as day,
And marble's language, Latin pure, discreet,
Aha, *elucescebat* quoth our friend?
No Tully, said I, Ulpian at the best!
Evil and brief hath been my pilgrimage.
All lapis, all, sons! Else I give the Pope
My villas! Will ye ever eat my heart?
Ever your eyes were as a lizard's quick,
They glitter like your mother's for my soul,
Or ye would heighten my impoverished frieze,
Piece out its starved design, and fill my vase
With grapes, and add a visor and a term,

And to the tripod ye would tie a lynx,
That in his struggle throws the thyrsus down,
To comfort me on my entablature
Whereon I am to lie till I must ask
"Do I live? Am I dead?" There, leave me, there!
For ye have stabbed me with ingratitude
To death. Ye wish it—God, ye wish it! Stone—
Gritstone, a-crumble! Clammy squares which sweat
As if the corpse they keep were oozing through—
And no more lapis to delight the world!
Well, go! I bless ye,—Fewer tapers there,
But in a row—and going, turn your backs—
Ay, like departing altar-ministrants.
And leave me in my church, the church for peace,
That I may watch at leisure if he leers—
Old Gandolf—at me, from his onion-stone,
As still he envied me, so fair she was!

REMINDING THE HEN.

BESSIE CHANDLER.

"IT'S well I ran into the garden,"
Said Eddie, his face all aglow;
"For what do you think, mamma, happened?
You never will guess it, I know.

"The little brown hen was there clucking;
'Cut-cut,' she'd say, quick as a wink,
Then 'cut-cut' again, only slower,
And then she would stop short and think.

"And then she would say it all over,
She *did* look so mad and so vexed;

For mamma, do you know, she'd forgotten
  The word that she ought to cluck next.

"So *I* said 'ca-*daw*-cut, ca-*daw*-cut,'
  As loud and as long as I could,
And she looked round at me very thankful;
  I tell you it made her feel good.

"Then she flapped, and said, 'cut-cut-ca-*daw*-cut;'
  She remembered just how it went then,
But it's well I ran into the garden,—
  She might never have clucked right again."

TRUNDLE-BED THEOLOGY.

L. G. BROWN.

AS mother saw her calmly stand
  Up in a garden corner,
A small green apple in her hand,
  She hastened out to warn her.
"My child, 'twill bring you untold woe;
Green apples can't be eaten so;
We'll have it baked—then it will do."

The next week at the Sunday school
  She learned the ancient story,
How Eve and Adam broke the rule
  And sacrificed their glory.
She told here playmates warningly:
"They ate the apples from the tree;
They'd ought to had 'em baked, you see."

WHAT GRANDMA SAYS.

GEORGE COOPER.

THOSE were wonderful days of long ago,
Grandmother says, and she must know.
There was quilting to do the whole year round—
The length and the breadth of those quilts astound;
Then summers were nicer far than these,
Apples were larger, so were trees—
Grandma says.

The manners of folks were more polite;
Winters less cold and flowers more bright,
And churning and chores went on all day—
Nobody could have stopped to play.
Now, where were the little children then?
For girls were all women, boys all men—
Grandma says.

Do you think they had then discovered toys,
Or ever had games and other joys?
And as for a shout or a romp, I'm sure
That would not have suited folks demure.
They never had any time for fun;
Everyone knitted, darned, or spun—
Grandma says.

Now it puzzled me once all this to hear,
Till one day I brought to grandma dear
A doll that I'd found, so queer and old,
Its body its limbs could scarcely hold.
She took it up tenderly and smiled—
"It's Betsey Jerusha Perkins, child!"
Grandma said.

Then she smoothed down its ragged frock and told
Of playtimes in those good days of old;
A far-away look came in her eyes,
That beamed with the mildness of twilight skies.
But why did she weep if she was glad?
"The prettiest doll I ever had!"
Grandma said.

IN TROUBLE.

JOSEPHINE POLLARD.

I DESS dere's somfin de matter, dere's mice on de pantry shelf.
My dolly looks scared an' I'm finkin' I'm—a little—bit—scared—myself.
My muvver went off an' left me, an' I'd been as dood as tood be,
If she'd only taken me wiv her or taken dat pantry key.
For my sweet toof dot a-jumpin' so hard dat it wouldn't stop
Till I'd got de jam, an' I taken just de teeniest, tiniest drop,
When I fought I heard somebody a-comin' right in at de door
An' de jam slipped out of my fingers an' dere it all is on de floor.
Dear me, but I'm drefful sorry, an' O what a scoldin' I'll get;
I want to see my dear muvver but I don't want to see her just yet.
Oh, how I wish she had taken off wiv her dat pantry key;
An' O how I wish dat my dolly had been naughty instead of me.

ENGAGED.

F. H. CURTISS.

WE met at Narragansett Pier—
It happened in the usual way—
She free as any bird, or freer;
I but a world-worn waif and stray.
A year ago it must have been
When first her graciousness I knew;
And she was barely twenty then,
While I—well I was twenty-two;
And inwardly I fiercely raged,
To think, alas! I was engaged.

We sailed, and swam and walked and rode.
I listened when she talked, entranced.
My love for her I plainly showed,
And, gracious heavens, how she danced!
I sent her roses every day,
A sentiment upon each brier:
The sums for them I had to pay,
If diamonds, could have been no higher.
And while the war of roses waged
I sighed to think I was engaged.

I fear she was a sad coquette.
She had such cunning, winning ways
'Twas wrong for me to love her—yet
I'd but within her eyes to gaze
And all good resolutions fled.
When for a week we had to part,
I felt all hope within me dead,
And left her with an aching heart,

Which fact to me was not assuaged
At thinking I was then engaged.

One night we talked of blighted hopes,
All interspersed with bitter sighs.
As one who yet in darkness gropes,
I asked that which when love replies
Makes glad the lover's heart for aye.
She answered in a trembling tone,
Close followed by a fluttering sigh
For which but kisses can atone.
But she—well, since that night I've aged—
She said she also was engaged.

THE OLD, OLD STORY.

IF I had told her in the spring
The old, old story briefly,
When the sparrow and robin began to sing,
And the plowing was over chiefly.

But haste makes waste, and the story sweet,
I reasoned, will keep through the sowing;
Till I drop the corn and plant the wheat,
And give them a chance for growing.

Had I even told the tale of June,
When the wind through the grass was blowing,
Instead of thinking it rather too soon
And waiting till after the mowing.

Or had I hinted out under the stars
That I knew a story worth hearing,
Lingering to put up the pasture bars,
Nor waited to do the shearing.

Now the barn is full, and so is the bin,
  But I've grown wise without glory,
Since love is the crop not gathered in,
  For my neighbor told her the story.

SHE WAS TRAVELING ALL ALONE

FRANK MARION.

SHE was a maid with rosy cheeks,
  Her eyes as bright as stars.
And she sat alone in one of the seats
  Of one of the railway cars.

There came a drummer passing through,
  With gripsack in his hand,
Whose cheek shows large, as it always does,
  In the face of a "traveling man."

Of course, he spied the vacant seat,
  And asked, in his sweetest tone,
"Is this seat engaged?" "No, sir," she said,
  "I'm traveling all alone."

"With your permission, then," said he,
  And his eyes his wish implied;
Then she made room and he sat down,
  Close by the fair maid's side.

The maid at first was very shy,
  But that soon wore away;
Then his tongue flew and her tongue, too,
  Nor had they so much to say.

But all good things must end at last.
"My station," said she, "good night."
One minute more and she had gone
Forever from his sight.

The drummer sought the smoking car,
To smoke and grieve alone;
And when he looked to see the time,
He found his watch was gone.

WHAT A BOY CAN DO.

THESE are some of the things that a boy can do:
He can whistle so loud that the air turns blue;
He can make all sounds of beast and bird,
And a thousand noises never heard.

He can crow or cackle, or he can cluck
As well as a rooster, hen, or duck;
He can bark like a dog, he can low like a cow,
And a cat itself can't beat his "meow."

He has sounds that are ruffled, striped, and plain;
He can thunder by as a railway train,
Stop at the stations at a breath, and then
Apply the steam and be off again.

He has all his powers in such command
He can turn right into a full brass band
With all of the instruments ever played,
As he makes of himself a street parade.

You can tell that a boy is very ill
If he's wide-awake and keeping still;
But earth would be—God bless their noise!—
A dull old place if there were no boys.

PO' LITTLE JUDE.

B. HACKLEY.

PO' little Jude!
Why, doan yo' know
Dat little chile?
A year ago
Her muddah died,
I reckon now
'Twah jais' las' spring
I'se tellin' yo'
'Bout little Jude.

Po' little waif
Endeed she war,
An' how she cried!
Jes' out de crib
Dat baby war
'N' her muddah died.
Could walk an' run
An' jabbah some,
Dat little Jude.
Hit make me cry,
Tale yo' hit do,
Jes' when I t'ink
'Bout little Jude.

De fun'al day
She war asleep,
Tuckt in de crib.
Dat little chile
Had on 'er bib—
Dat orfin Jude.

De mo'ners come;
An' when dey pray,
Dat little Jude
Waked up an' say:
"Mammie! Mammie!"
Jes' dat way.
Nobody knew
Jes' what to do
Wid little Jude.

She cry so ha'd
Dey lif' her down.
F'm room to room
She toddled roun'
A-cryin': "Mammie,
Come an' take
Yo' little Judy's
Dot awake—
Yo' little Judy's
Wide-awake."

My lan'! De teahs
Come in my eyes!
But when she foun'
Her own high chaiah
Dat had been hid,
An' pushed it up
'Longside ob whah
Her muddah was,
An' den climbed up
An' pounded on
De coffin lid,
I couldn't stan'
De awful grief,
De sobs an' teahs,
An' little Jude
A-lookin' roun'

Foh one dat now
At las' she foun'—
Why, chile, I kain't,
I nevah will—
Fo'get dat day!

THE UNSUCCESSFUL PLAN.

IN a small, pretty village in Nottinghamshire,
There formerly lived a respectable squire
Who possessed an estate from encumbrances clear,
And an income enjoyed of a thousand a year.

The country he loved; he was fond of the chase,
And, now and then, entered a horse at a race.
He excelled all his friends in amusements athletic,
And his manner of living was far from æsthetic.

A wife he had taken for better, for worse,
Whose temper had proved an intolerant curse;
And 'twas plain to perceive, this unfortunate wife
Was the torment, vexation, and plague of his life!

Her face it was fair, but a beautiful skin
May often conceal a temper within,
And he who is anxious to fix his affections,
Should always look farther than lovely complexions.

Nine years passed away, and to add to his grief
No infantile prattle e'er brought him relief,
Till at length, to his great and unspeakable joy,
He the father became of a fine little boy.

The father grew proud of his juvenile heir,
A sweet little cherub, with dark eyes and hair,
Yet strange to relate, his paternal anxiety,
Soon debarred him the bliss of his darling's society.

For he thought, and with truth, to his termagant wife
Might be justly ascribed all the woes of his life.
"Had I ne'er seen a woman," he often would sigh,
"What squire in the country, so happy as I!"

In a forest removed some miles, far away,
Whether Sherwood or not, the tradition don't say,
Our hero possessed an Arcadian retreat,
A snug little hunting-box, rural and neat.

Strange fancies men have. 'Twas here he designed
To watch o'er the dawn of his son's youthful mind,
Where, only approached by the masculine gender,
No room should be left him for feelings more tender.

To further his plan, he procured coadjutors
In two very excellent, painstaking tutors.
Who agreed for the sum of two hundred a year
His son to instruct, and immure themselves here.

Time passed quickly on, year succeeded to year,
Yet brought no abatement to fatherly fear,
Till at length this remarkably singular son
Could number of years that had passed, twenty-one.

Now the father had settled his promising son
Should his studies conclude, when he'd reached twenty-
one,
And a view of the world was the only thing needed.
To see how his singular plan had succeeded.

The summer was come, 'twas the end of October,
When autumn's gay tints turn to liveries more sober;
At the end of this month, 'twas known far and near,
A large fair at Nottingham was held every year.

He hit on this fair as the place of début.
Strange resolve, when to keep the fair out of his view
Had been his most earnest endeavor through life,
And the bone of contention 'twixt him and his wife.

This point by his firmness he had constantly carried—
The only one gained, ever since they were married.
And he went with a heart beating high with emotion
To launch his young son on life's turbulent ocean.

As they entered the fair a young maiden tripped by,
With a cheek like the rose, and a bright, laughing eye.
"O father! what's that?" cried the youth with delight,
As this vision of loveliness burst on his sight.

"Oh, that is only a thing called a goose, my dear son,
We shall see plenty more ere our journey is done."
So as onward they passed, each sight brought to view
Some spectacle equally singular and new;

Till the joy of the youth scarcely knew any bounds—
At the rope-dancers, tumblers, and merry-go-rounds.
When at length the tour of the fair was completed,
The father resolved that his son should be treated.

So pausing a moment, he said, "My dear son,
A new era to-day in your life has begun.
Though the plan I've adopted to some may seem strange,
You have never induced me to wish for a change.

"And now, in remembrance of Nottingham fair,
And a proof of your father's affection and care,

Of all this bright scene, and the gayeties in it,
Choose whatever you like, it is yours from this minute!"
"Choose whatever I like," cried the youthful recluse,
"Oh, thank you, dear father, then give me a *goose!*"

A VICTIM TO ONE HUNDRED AND SEVEN FATAL MALADIES.

JEROME K. JEROME.

IT is a most extraordinary thing, but I never read a patent medicine advertisement without being impelled to the conclusion that I am suffering from the particular disease therein dealt with, in its most virulent form. The diagnosis seems in every case to correspond with all the sensations that I have ever felt.

I remember going to a library one day to read up the treatment for some slight ailment of which I had a touch—hay-fever, I fancy it was. I got down the book, and read all I came to read; and then, in an unthinking moment, I idly turned the leaves, and began to indolently study diseases, generally. I forgot which was the first distemper I plunged into—some fearful, devastating scourge, I know—and before I had glanced half down the list of "premonitory symptoms," it was borne in upon me that I had fairly got it.

I sat for a while frozen with horror; and then, in the listlessness of despair, I again turned over the pages. I came to typhoid fever—read the symptoms—discovered that I had typhoid fever, must have had it for months without knowing it—wondered what else I had got; turned up St. Vitus's Dance—found, as I expected, that I had that, too,—began to get interested in my case, and determined to sift it to the bottom, and so started alphabetically; read up ague,

and learned that I was sickening for it, and that the acute stage would commence in about another fortnight. Cholera I had, with severe complications; and diphtheria I seemed to have been born with. I plodded conscientiously through the twenty-six letters, but the only malady I could conclude I did not have was housemaid's knee.

I sat and pondered. I thought what an interesting case I must be from a medical point of view. What an acquisition I should be to a class! Students would have no need to "walk the hospitals," if they had me. I was a hospital in myself. All they need do would be to walk round me, and, after that, take their diploma.

Then I wondered how long I had to live. I tried to examine myself. I felt my pulse. I could not at first feel any pulse at all. Then, all of a sudden, it seem to start off. I pulled out my watch and timed it. I made it a hundred and forty-seven to the minute. I tried to feel my heart. I could not feel my heart. It had stopped beating. I have since been induced to come to the opinion that it must have been there all the time, and must have been beating, but I cannot account for it. I patted myself all over my front, from what I call my waist up to my head, and I went a bit round each side, and a little way up the back. But I could not feel or hear anything. I tried to look at my tongue. I stuck it out as far as ever it would go, and I shut one eye, and tried to examine it with the other. I could see only the tip, and the only thing that I could gain from that was to feel more certain than before that I had scarlet fever.

I had walked into that reading-room a happy, healthy man; I crawled out a decrepit wreck.

I went to my medical man. He is an old chum of mine, and feels my pulse, and looks at my tongue, and talks about the weather, all for nothing, when I fancy I'm ill; so I thought I would do him a good turn by going to him now.

"What a doctor wants," I said, "is practice. He shall have me. He will get more practice out of me than out of

seventeen hundred of your ordinary, commonplace patients, with only one or two diseases each." So I went straight up and saw him, and he said:

"Well, what's the matter with you?"

I said: "I will not take up your time, dear boy, with telling you what is the matter with me. Life is brief, and you might pass away before I had finished. But I will tell you what is *not* the matter with me. I have not got housemaid's knee. Why I have not got housemaid's knee, I cannot tell you; but the fact remains that I have not got it. Everything else, however, I *have* got."

And I told him how I came to discover it all.

Then he looked at me, and clutched hold of my wrist, and then he hit me over the chest when I wasn't expecting it—a cowardly thing to do, I call it—and immediately afterward butted me with the side of his head. After that, he sat down and wrote out a prescription, and folded it up and gave it to me, and I put it in my pocket and went out.

I did not open it. I took it to the nearest chemist's, and handed it in. The man read it, and then handed it back. He said he didn't keep it.

I said: "You are a chemist?"

He said: "I am a chemist. If I was a coöperative store and family hotel combined, I might be able to oblige you. Being only a chemist hampers me."

I read the prescription. It ran:

"1 lb. beefsteak, with
1 pt. bitter beer every six hours.
1 ten-mile walk every morning.
1 bed at 11 sharp every night.

"And don't stuff up your head with things you don't understand."

I followed the directions, with the happy result (speaking for myself) that my life was preserved, and is still going on.

OCTOBER'S PARTY.

GEORGE COOPER.

OCTOBER gave a party. The leaves by hundreds came—
The Ashes, Oaks, and Maples, and leaves of every name.
The Sunshine spread a carpet, and everything was grand;
Miss Weather led the dancing; Professor Wind the band.

The Chestnuts came in yellow; the Oaks in crimson dressed;
The lovely Misses Maple, in purple, looked their best.
All balanced to their partners, and gayly fluttered by;
The sight was like a rainbow new fallen from the sky.

Then in the rusty hollows, at hide-and-seek they played.
The party closed at sundown and everybody stayed.
Professor Wind played louder; they flew along the ground,
And then the party ended in jolly "hands all round."

UNCLE PETER'S MASTERLY ARGUMENT.

FRANK R. STOCKTON.

[By permission of the author.]

THE negro church which stood in Pine Valley near the little village of Oxford was presided over by an elderly individual known to the community as Uncle Peter, but on Sundays the members of his congregation addressed him as "Brudder Peter." He was an earnest, energetic man, and although he could neither read nor write, had for

many years expounded the Scripture to the satisfaction of his hearers. He enjoyed the good opinion of all save one—his wife—a high-tempered person who had conceived the idea that Uncle Peter was in the habit of giving too much time to the church, and not enough to the acquisition of brown bread and pork.

On a certain Saturday, she gave him a tremendous scolding which so affected the spirits of the good man that it influenced him in the selection of his sermon for the next day. He didn't take any particular text—that was not his custom—but he boldly declared that the Bible stated that every woman was possessed of seven devils, and the evil which this state of things had brought into the world, he showed forth with great warmth and feeling. Subject-matter drawn principally from his own experience crowded into his mind and he served it out to his audience loud and strong.

"Now, my dear bruddrin ob dis congregation, I don't want you wot hear dis sermon ter think yoursefs angels by no means; my dear bruddrin, you was all brung up by de women, an' you must lib wid 'em, an' der's nuthin' so ketchin' as debbels; an' from wot I've seen ob most ob de men ob dis world, deys got all de debbels deys got room for. But wid de women it's different, deys got jes' seven debbels, an' dat's enough."

As might be expected, the sermon produced a profound sensation. As a rule, the men were tolerably well pleased with it, but the women did not like it at all. Some of the more vigorous minded of them, not seeing their minister at the close of the sermon, went to look for him, and on arriving at his cabin, found there only his wife, Aunt Rebecca, who told them that her husband was not at home. When she was informed as to the object of their visit, strange to say, she evinced no unpleasant surprise; on the contrary, she seemed rather to enjoy it.

"Well, I reckon he ought to know about dem yer debbles, he's gone done an' had free wives, but he ain't got rid of dis one yit."

During the ensuing week, some of the older members of the church succeeded in gaining a general consent that Uncle Peter should have a chance to explain himself. If he could show Biblical authority for his statement that woman was possessed of seven devils, nothing more would be said, but if he could not, then they wanted no more preaching and praying from him.

During all this time of angry discussion, Uncle Peter was cutting wood up in Little Mountain. He returned to his home on Saturday night, retired to his simple couch, knowing nothing of the terrible storm that was to burst upon him.

In the morning, individuals gathered in and about his cabin to tell what he had done. But Uncle Peter possessed a stubborn soul and was not easily frightened.

"Wot I said in de pulpit, I'll 'splain in de pulpit; an' you jes' git erlong ter de church now an' when de time fer de service comes, I'll be dar."

When Uncle Peter had put on his cowhide boots, he betook himself to the little log building where he had so often held forth to his people. On entering the church, he was formally instructed that before beginning his sermon, he must make it plain to the congregation that what he said about women being possessed of seven devils was Scripture truth; if he could do this, nothing more would be said, but if he could not, then he must come down from the pulpit and for the remainder of his life take a back seat in the church.

Good Uncle Peter said nothing, but ascended the steps to the little pulpit. Having placed his hat on the bench behind him, he took out his red cotton handkerchief and blew his nose vigorously and looked about him.

"Bruddrin an' sisters," said he, "I see before me Brudder Bill Hines who has got a Bible an' kin read. Ain't dat so, Bill?"

Bill modestly nodded assent.

"An' I see before me Aunt Persiller's boy, Jake, who kin read. Ain't dat so, Jake?"

Jake nodded also.

"An' I see udders wot have got Bibles an' kin read. Now I asks all ob you wot have got Bibles an' kin read, did you eber read or hab read ter yer, dat de dear Lord when He was on dis earth cast seben debbels out'n de Mary Magdalene ?"

A murmur of assent.

"An' did any ob you eber read or hab read ter you dat he cast 'em out ob any udder woman ?"

"No."

"Well, den, all de udder women has got dem yit."

LUCKY JIM.

JIM was my friend, till one unhappy day
The usual cause—a pretty girl—came in our way.
From that day on we seemed to drift apart,
For each aspired to win her maiden heart;
But, though I tried each art and winning wile,
'Twas not on me she gave her sweetest smile.
Each day I saw my chances grow more dim,
Until—to my despair—one day she married Jim.
Ah, lucky Jim!
How I envied him!

Three years passed on—long years they seemed to me—
And then Jim died, and once more "she" was free.
Before me rose the bright hopes of the past;
I wooed, I sued, and married her at last.
I've got my way; and, now she is my wife,
I know just what there is in married life;
And when I think of Jim, though under ground,
Enjoying peace and quiet most profound,
Ah, lucky Jim!
How I envy him!

GRANDMA'S ANGEL.

SYDNEY DAYRE.

MAMMA said: "Little one, go and see
If grandmother's ready to come to tea."
I knew I mustn't disturb her, so
I stepped as gently along tiptoe,
And stood a moment to take a peep.
And there was grandmother fast asleep.
I knew it was time for her to wake;
I thought I'd give a little shake,
Or tap at her door, or gently call;
But I hadn't the heart for that at all—
She looked so sweet and so quiet there,
Lying back in her high arm-chair,
With her dear, white hair, and a little smile
That means she's loving you all the while.
I didn't make a speck of noise;
I knew she was dreaming of little boys
And girls who lived with her long ago,
And then went to heaven—she told me so.
I went up close, and I didn't speak
One word, but I gave her on the cheek
The softest bit of a little kiss.
And just in a whisper then said this:
"Grandmother dear, it's time for tea."
She opened her eyes and looked at me,
And said, "Why, pet, I have just now dreamed
Of a little angel who came and seemed
To kiss me lovingly on my face."
She pointed right at the very place!
I never told her 'twas only me.
I took her hand, and we went to tea.

AN OLD-TIME NEGRO.

BILL ARP.

[By permission of the author.]

JOHN THOMAS is one of the good old stock and is content to be a negro.

"I is jes' a common, old-fashion' nigger, I is, bless de Lord."

"Are you going to make a crop this year, John?"

"No, sir, boss, I hain't. A poor darkey like me what hain't got nuffin' can't make no crop to do him any good. I been try now for t'ree years, right straight along, and I comes outen behime eb'ry time. When cotton bring good price I don't make but half a crap. When I make a whole crap, den it don't bring nuffin' hardly, and so betwixt de one and between de oder, I comes outen behime. I don't know how it is, boss. I work for as fine men as ever brake bread, 'pears like, but dey is all got too many figgers for me; I neber go to settle but dey has de whole sides of de book full of figgers and de figgers is all for dem and nary figger for John. Look like dat figgers has had sumthin' agin me ever since freedom. De white folks say, 'Dar is de figgers, John—dat what de figgers say' and dey lay it all on de figgers. Dar is de bacon and de meal and de 'lasses and de 'bakka all right, and I get 'em and me and de ole 'oman and de chillun eat it all up and dat's so, bless God, and we could have sumfin' wid all dat ef it wa'nt for de figgers—dey is de biggest load of all for a poor nigger to carry. I could pay for eb'rything but de figgers. I makes cotton and I makes corn. Cotton for de 'vancements, and corn for my bread. Boss gits all de cotton for de 'vancements and all de corn for de figgers, and 'fore Chris'mas cum I hain't got nuffin' and hav' to work in de mines beside. And so I hain't gwine to crap it no more un-

twell de times gits better. I is jes' gwine to job it roun' and about."

I think that John is about fifty years old, and it does him good to talk to children about the old times, and how he was "born'd in de Alabam', and he fell to his young mistiss what got marr'd and moved to old Putnam and den up here, and how he used to hunt de possum and de coon and foller up de ole houn's mos' all night wid massa and de boys, and work all de nex' day same as ever, and how Sat'day nights he used to go ten mile to see a gal he were shinin' and he had to be back home by sunrise a Monday mornin', and one time he overslep' hisself and hear de old rooster crow for daybrake, and he bounce up and took his shoes in his hand and strike a trot for home; and he was gwine to'ard de wes' whar de sun sets and dat giv' him de 'vantage; and he run and de day broke, and sometimes when he rise de hill de day broke 'gin on him a little, and he look back and git skeerd, for he knowed dat de overseer get him if he warn't dar, and den he spit on his hands and mend his trot down de hill and away long de level road, and he gain on de daybrake, and he run and de daybrake run and bime by de daybrake overtake him good and was passin' by and gettin' ahead, and it were only one hour to sunrise and he had five miles to go and he knew he could make dat, and shore en'uff at de top of de next long hill he hear de big bugle blow and he stops to rest a minute, and say, 'Tank de Lord, tank de Lord. Overseer not gwine to git nigger dis time,' for dat bugle was de warnin' to git up, and it was an hour to work time. 'So I puts on my shoes and strikes a fox trot ag'in and gits dar jes' as de overseer was a-lookin' round, and I hear him say, "Whar's John," and I draws a big breff and say, "Here I is," jes' like I'd been dar all night.'"

Then John looks round and laughs and pauses a moment fo the children to say, "Tell on, John."

"Dat's a fak. Chillun, I's tellin' you I run agin daybrake one time, and I beat him shore in a fair race, but I couldn't do it now, of coas I couldn't. Nigger used to have hard time wid dem overseers, and he have good time, too—dere ain't much diffe'nce 'twixt now and 'twixt den—hard time now, too."

THE NEW BABY.

C. M. SNYDER.

SOMEBODY tum to us las' night,
The dearest little midget;
He's dus as wee as he tan be;
He tum all by hisself, an' he
Dus laughs, an' cries, an' winks at me,
An' keeps me in a fidget.

He dus tum in from babyland,
The angels bwung him over;
An' papa told me that he found
The little fellow on the ground,
An' he was sleeping dus as sound
As I do, in the clover.

'Tourse I ain't sorry that he tum,.
I'se glad to see him—only
I want some love an' tisses, too;
For since he tum, they don't—boo-hoo!—
Play wis me like they ust to do,
An' I is awful lonely.

He's dus bran' new—an' that is why
They fuss about him, maybe;
An' papa said I musn't cwy
'Tause he'd det bigger by an' by—
But ain't he little now? Oh, my!—
He's only dus a baby.

Dood dracious! Won't he ever stop?
I tan't hear nuffin near him.
No wonder all the angels thought
That they could spare this little tot—
He cwies so much; that's why they brought
Him where they touldn't hear him!

TWO CHRISTMAS EVES.

A MONOLOGUE FOR A MAN.

E. NESBIT.

FOR me you left, my dearest, best,
Your girlhood's safe, warm, sheltered nest;
For me gave up all else that could
Have made your woman-life seem good.
You thought a man's whole heart was worth
Just all the other wealth of earth;
I thought my painter's brush would be
A magic wand for you and me.
What dreams we had of fame and gold,
Of art, that never could withhold
From me, who loved her so, full powers
To make my love for her serve ours.
Art turned away her face from us,
And all the dreaming's ended—thus!
Our garret's cold; the wind is keen,
And cuts these rotten boards between.
There is no lock upon the door,
No carpet on the uneven floor.
Why, how you shiver! Oh, my sweet,
How cold your hands are, and your feet!
There's no more firing, and the cold
Is biting through your shawl's thin fold,
And both the blankets have been sold.
We pawned the table and the bed
To get our last week's fire and bread,
And now the last crust's eaten. Well,
There's nothing left to pawn or sell!
Our rent is due on Monday, too;
How can we pay it—I and you?

And we are—what was that you said ?
You are so tired ? Your dearest head
Is burning hot, and aching so?
Ah, yes! I know it is—I know!
You're tired and weak and faint and ill.
And fevers burn and shiverings chill.
Don't go to sleep; you mustn't sleep
Here on the frozen floor! Yes, creep
Closer to me. Oh, if I knew
What is this something left to do!

Listen to me! It's Christmas eve,
When hearts grow warmer, I believe.
What if we stifled down my pride,
And put your bitter thoughts aside,
And asked your father's help once more?
True, when we asked for it before,
He turned and cursed us both, and swore
That he disowned you. You and I
Had made our bed, and there must lie;
That he would help us not one whit,
Though we should die for want of it.
The cold creeps closer to life's core—
Death's nearer to us than before,
And when your father sees how near,
He may relent, and save you, dear.
Stand up. You're stiff? That will not last!
The stairs are dark? They'll soon be passed!
You're tired? My sweet, I know you are;
But try to walk—it isn't far.
Oh, that the Christ they say was born
On that dream-distant Christmas morn
May hear and help us now. Be strong!
Come; I will help you walk. We'll try
Just this last venture, you and I!

* * * * * *

Failed! Back again in the ice-gloom

Of our bare, bleak, rat-haunted room!
We dragged our weary, faltering feet
Through the bright, noisy, crowded street,
And reached the square where, stern in stone,
Her father's town-house stands alone.
They let us in. Then let us tread
Through the warm hall with soft furs spread.
Next, "name and business." Oh, exact
Were the man's orders how to act,
If e'er his master's child should come
To cross the threshold of her home!
I told our name. The man "would see
If any message" was for me.
We waited there without a word.
How warm the whole house was! We heard
Soft music with soft voices blent,
And smelt sweet flowers with mingled scent,
And heard the wine poured out—that chink
That glass makes as the diners drink.

Then someone gave a note to me
With insolent smile. I read: "*When she*
Is tired of love and poverty,
And chooses to return to what
She left, the duties she forgot,
And never see again this man,
And be here as before—she can."

We came away. That much is clear;
I don't know how we got back here—
I must have carried her somehow,
And have been strong enough. And now
She lies asleep—and I, awake,
Must do this something for her sake—
If now I let your father know
My choice is made, and that I go

And you are here—oh, love! oh, wife!
I break my heart and save your life.

Good-bye, dear eyes I cannot see,
Weep only gently, eyes, for me;
Dear lips I've kissed and kissed again,
Lose those encircling lines of pain;
Dear face, so thin and faded now,
Win back youth's grace, and light, and glow;
Oh, hands I hold in mine—oh, heart
That holds mine in it—we must part!
Good-bye—our room, our married life—
Oh, kiss me through your dreams, sweet wife!

* * * * * *

I have grown rich! I have found out
The thing men break their hearts about!
I have dug gold and gold, and sold
My diggings, and reaped in more gold!
How I have wondered every day
How you would look, and what would say.
Mayhap she dreams—what could there be
For her to dream about but me?
I'll seek her at her father's; say
"I claim my wife. I will repay
A hundredfold all you have spent
On keeping me in banishment,
On keeping her in affluence,
At her heart's dearest coin's expense!
That is past now, and I have come
To take my wife and sweetheart home."

But just before that hour supreme,
Close here our old house is, that dream
And daylight have been showing me
The year through. I would like to see
That room I found so hard to leave,

So hard to keep last Christmas eve.
Just one look at the old room's door,
If I can get no chance of more;
Yet gold will buy most things—may buy
The leave to see that room. We'll try!

May I go up? Just once to see
The room that sheltered her and me?
My God! The rapture of to-day
Has sent me mad! You did not say
She died the night I went away!

NOT WILLIN.'

SAYS bould Barney Milligan
To Biddy McSnilligan:
"Och, faith! it's mesilf wud be loikin' a kiss!"
Cries Biddy McSnilligan,
"Ye'd betther be still ag'in
Oi'll not be endoorin' sich tratement as this."

"Arrah! dearest Biddy,
Be aisy, be stiddy,
Indade, it's no use to be actin' loike this;
Ouch! Scratch a man's nose off,
An' tear all his clo'es off,
It's a de'il uv a row to be gittin' a kiss."

"Go way, Mr. Barney,
No more uv yer blarney,
Or instid uv a kiss ye'll be gittin' a kick.
Ould red-headed Barney,
Yer wastin' yer blarney,
Fur—Here comes the missis! Ach, Barney, be quick!"

A HOTEL IN THE STORM.

JULIA NOYES STICKNEY.

HARK! heard ye not that trumpet sound,
While the cold rain is pouring?
Is it the wind that howls around,
From eastern storm-caves roaring?

Is it the thunder from the cloud
Above us wildly hanging,
Exploding with concussion loud,
With heaven's artillery charging?

Is it the earthquake fraught with fear
That rends the earth asunder,
And throws upon the startled ear,
A shock more wild than thunder?

Is it the sea that beats the shores
And threatens all the sand-hills,
As the north wind his fury pours
Upon New Hampshire's grand hills?

Is it the fog-horn, solemn, deep,
Loud o'er the sand-bar braying,
While vessels far their distance keep,
When mists and storms are playing?

Ah! no,—a mightier sound I hear,
Than tempest-gales loud roaring,
More awful than the earthquake's fear—
'Tis the proprietor snoring.

MUZZER'S CHIL'REN.

JAMES OTIS.

MY muzzer's almos' trazy,
Her chil'ren are so bad,
An' my drate big sister Daisy
Does mate her drefful sad,
So she says.

An' Daisy is a 'norful girl.
Her nice new frock she tored,
An' 'tause she had her hair to turl
Why, she—why, she jus' roared
Yes'erday.

When baby cwyed, an' muzzer said:
"Go an' wock little Clair,"
She puts trums in his tradle spread,
An' chew-dum in his hair
Tozzer day.

Dess I'se sometimes 'norful, too—
Of tourse I is, I know;
But what's a yittle girl to do
When she don't wort or sew
'Tause she tan't ?

She dot to twy; be tross, too,
When she's so small as me;
That's all the way she has to do
When she's tired—don't oo see ?
Tourse oo do ?

When I'se weally dood an' nice
Frough all de drate long day,
Papa talls me a pearl of pwice
An' muzzer's dlad to say
"She was dood."

MOST FELLOWS KNOW.

WHEN Mr. Jenkins went to his bedroom at half-past one, it was with the determination of going to sleep, and with another determination that he would not be interviewed by Mrs. Jenkins. So as soon as he had entered the door, and deposited his lamp upon the dressing-table, he commenced his speech:

"I locked the front door. I put the chain on. I pulled the key out a little bit. The dog is inside. I put the kitten out. I emptied the drip pan of the refrigerator. The cook took the silver to bed with her. I put a cane under the knob of the back hall door. I put the fastenings over the bathroom windows. The parlor fire has coal on. I put the cake box back in the closet. I did not drink all the milk. It is not going to rain. Nobody gave me any message for you. I mailed your letters as soon as I got downtown. Your mother did not call at the office. Nobody died that we are interested in. Did not hear of a marriage or an engagement. I was very busy at the office making out bills. I have hung my clothes over chair-backs. I want a new egg for breakfast. I think that is all, and I will now put out the light."

Mr. Jenkins felt that he had hedged against all inquiry, and a triumphant smile was upon his face as he took hold of the gas check, and sighted a line for the bed, when he was earthquaked by a ringing laugh, and the query from Mrs. Jenkins:

"Why didn't you take off your hat?"

CARMELITA.

JULIA MILLS DUNN.

NEBER hearn tell o' dat, honey? 'Twas more'n twenty year ago
When we sent dem soldiers flyin' an' dey didn't run noways slow,
When dey tuk to de woods down yander jes' at de set ob sun,
Caps off, an' coats a-flappin'. Laws! how dem Yanks did run.

You see it happened dis way: Ol' marse done gone away,
An' me an' Miss Carmelita we'se all alone dat day.
Way off in de field ob cotton, whar you see dat riber bend,
All hands were busy to sabe de crap from de raid ob de Linkum men.

Men an' women' an' chil'en singin' an' workin' away,
An' eben de oberseer, Marse Brown, he had to work dat day;
Kase word had come in de mawnin', dat down in de big bayou
Two gunboats waited, full ob arms fer de use ob de boys in blue.

I kin see dat picture now, honey—a purple mist dat lies
Like a wreath ob smoke on de hilltops, de fleecy clouds in de skies,
De billowy waves ob cotton as de soft breeze crept along,
An' de ripplin' swash ob de riber, mixed wid de darkeys' song.

Out on de east veranda ol' marse's hammock hung,
An' to an' fro, like a hang-bird, Miss Carmelita swung.

TO A TIRED MOTHER.

MARY RILEY SMITH.

A LITTLE elbow leans upon your knee,
  Your tired knee which has so much to bear,
A child's dear eyes are looking lovingly
  From underneath a thatch of tangled hair.
Perhaps you do not heed the velvet touch
  Of warm, moist fingers holding yours so tight;
You do not prize this blessing overmuch;
  You almost are too tired to pray to-night.

But it is blessedness! A year ago,
  I did not see it as I do to-day.
We are so dull and thankless, and too slow
  To catch the sunshine, till it slips away.
And now it seems surpassing strange to me
  That, while I wore the badge of motherhood,
I did not kiss more oft and tenderly
  The little child that brought me only good.

And if, some night when you sit down to rest,
  You miss the elbow from your tired knee,
The restless curly head from off your breast,
  This lisping tongue that chatters constantly;
If from your own the dimpled hand had slipped,
  And ne'er would nestle in your palm again,
If the white feet into the grave had tripped,
  I could not blame you for your heartache then.

I wonder so that mothers ever fret
  At little children clinging to their gown;
Or that the footprints, when the days are wet,
  Are ever black enough to make them frown.

If I could find a little muddy boot,
  Or cap, or jacket, on my chamber floor,
If I could kiss a rosy, restless foot,
  And hear it patter in my home once more,

If I could mend a broken cart to-day,
  To-morrow make a kite to reach the sky—
There is no woman in God's world could say
  She was more blissfully content than I.
But, ah! the dainty pillow next my own
  Is never rumpled by a shining head.
My singing birdling from its nest has flown;
  The little boy I used to kiss is dead!

IF I WERE A BOY AGAIN.

EDGAR WILSON NYE.

[By permission of the author.]

IF I were a boy again, endowed with the same wild passion for plucking watermelons in the dark of the moon, I would no doubt fall a victim to that overmastering passion as I did before, but looking at it as I do now, I would be wiser. Boys cannot, however, have the mature judgment of manhood without the experience and the rheumatism that go with it. So it is better that in our childhood we may be able to eat a raw turnip with safety, and know something later on in life.

I notice a great change in myself while comparing my present condition with that of joyous boyhood. Then, I had

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no sense, but I had a good digestion. Now, I haven't even the digestion.

The hurrying years have cavorted over my sunny head, but they have left a good deal yet for me to learn. I am still engaged in learning during the day, and putting arnica on my experience at night.

Childhood is said to be the most gladsome period in our lives, and in some respects this statement may be regarded as reliable, but it is not all joy. I have had just as much fun in later years as I did in boyhood, though the people with whom I have been thrown in contact claim that their experience has been different. I hope they do not mean anything personal by that.

I do sometimes wish that I could be a boy again, but I smother that wish on account of my parents. What they need most is rest and change of scene. They still enjoy children, but they would like a chance to select the children with whom they associate.

My parents were blest with five bright-eyed and beautiful little boys, three of whom grew up and by that means became adults. I am in that condition myself. I was the eldest of the family with the exception of my parents. I am still that way. My early life was rather tempestuous in places, occasionally flecked with sunshine, but more frequently with retribution. I was not a very good roadster when young, and so retribution was 'most always just in the act of overtaking me. While outraged justice was getting in its work on me, the other boys escaped through a small aperture in the fence.

That is another reason why I do not yearn to be a boy again. When we ran away from school to catch chubs, and when we built a fire to cook them and the fire got into the tall, dry grass and burned four miles of fence and sixteen tons of hay for a gentleman for whom I had a high regard, and I went back to put out the fire, the other boys escaped and have so remained ever since.

A just retribution has never had any difficulty in overtaking me and walking up and down over my wishbone.

When a party of us had been engaged in gathering Easter eggs in the barn of a gentleman who was away from home at the time, and he returned just as we had filled our pockets with the choicest vintage of his sun-kissed hens, the other boys escaped while I was occupying the attention of the dog, and I had to slide out the second story of the barn. It is still fresh in my mind as I write. I wore my father's vest at that time, and it was larger than necessary. My father was larger than I, at that time, for I was only nine years of age and had not arrived at my full stature. In sliding down the batten, I discovered that the upper end of it was loose and that my flowing vest had slipped over it, so that when I got down about four feet, I hung with the board buttoned inside my bosom and the scrambled eggs oozing out of my knickerbockers. The batten had sprung back against the barn in such a way as to prevent my unbottoning my vest, and while I hung there on the side of the barn, like a coon skin, the proprietor came around and accused me of prematurely gathering his eggs. I had heard truth very highly spoken of by people who had dabbled in it more or less, and so I resolved to try it in this instance. So I admitted that such was the case; and it was the best thing I could have done, for the man said as I had been so frank with him he would take me down as soon as he got his other work done, and he was as good as his word. After he had milked nine cows and fed nine calves, he came around with a ladder and took me down. He also spanked me and set the dog on me, but I did not mind that, for I was accustomed to it. To hang on the side of a barn, however, like an autumn leaf, trying to kick large holes in the atmosphere, is disagreeable.

This incident cast a gloom over my whole life. It has also reconciled me to the awful decree that I can never be a boy again.

GRANDMAMMA'S FAN.

EDITH SESSIONS TUPPER.

IVORY sticks and painted face,
Bits of yellow, tattered lace,
Tiny mirror set in place,
Beauty sadly marred by age,
But a treasure I'll engage,
When the minuet was the rage.

Fancy I can see her now—
Powdered locks above her brow,
Sweeping courtesy, mincing bow;
Such a dainty, graceful maid—
One hand holds her stiff brocade,
Other wields the coquette's aid.

O'er her little head well curled
Spreads the silken toy unfurled.
Now it's shut—anon it's twirled
To conceal a stolen glance,
Or a crimson glance perchance,
As she treads the stately dance.

Ghostly, fleeting vision fair,
Flashing eyes and powdered hair,
Marble shoulders glancing bare—
Time rolls backward for a space.
O'er this faded silk and lace
Gleams the witch'ry of thy face.

A HELPING HAND.

ELLA HIGGINSON.

ON the lowest round of the ladder I firmly planted my feet,
And looked up at the dim, vast distance that made my future so sweet.
I climbed till my vision grew weary; I climbed till my brain was on fire;
I planted each footstep with wisdom—yet I never seemed to get higher.
For this round was glazed with indifference, and that one was gilded with scorn,
And when I grasped firmly another, I found, under velvet, a thorn.
Till my brain grew weary of planning, and my heart-strength began to fail,
And the flush of the morning's excitement, ere evening, commenced to pale.
But just when my hands were unclasping their hold on the last-gained round,
When my hopes, coming back from the future, were sinking again to the ground—
One who had climbed near to the summit reached backward a helping hand;
And refreshed, encouraged, and strengthened, I took, once again, my stand.
And I wish, oh, I wish, that the climbers would never forget, as they go,
That, though weary may seem *their* climbing, there is always someone below.

PIECING THE PREACHER'S QUILT.

IDORA M. PLOWMAN

[By permission of the author.]

ACCORDIN' to app'intment the women folks all met at Piney Grove meetin'-house, down the road here, t'other Saddy to make a quilt for the parson.

"We 'uns can't let the po' man suffer fur the want of kiver," says ole Mis' Strong.

He wasn't their preacher, but had been in years gone by. He was away off yander in another State now, er-gittin' mighty po' pay for preachin', and word had come to Piney Grove that he was needy.

"You 'uns may not believe it," says ole Mis' Strong, "but they do say that he hain't got er quilt nor er coverled nor er counterpin ter his name, and has ter roll hisse'f ever' night in his hoss blanket."

"I say it!" says ole Mis' Green. "An' what's his critter er-doin' whilst he's er-kiverin' with its blanket?"

"Laws, 'oman, he hain't got no critter."

"Well, whar's his wife," says Mis' Green, "that she can't make him some kind of er quilt?"

"He hain't got no wife, nuther," says Mis' Strong.

"No wonder," says Mis' Green, "no wonder he ain't got narn, he ain't no account an' nobody won't have him. Ef he can't preach, why 'n't he plough?"

"He's too po' ter marry," says Mis' Strong; "they don't pay him enough fur preachin'; they ought ter be ashamed of theyselves ter let him preach ter 'em fur next ter nothin'. You can't expect er man ter have er wife nor er horse when he hain't got nothin' ter feed 'em on."

Then ole man Madison up and 'lowed: "I expect it's po' preach and po' pay. When a man gits so he can't make

nuthin' er-preachin', he ought ter turn in and do sump'n' else; he ought ter know that if he can't make enough by preachin' ter buy kiver for his bed, that he wasn't called, and it's my opinions ef you women folks sends that quilt you'll thes' be er-upholdin' his laziness."

"Now, ole man," says ole Mis' Madison, "tain't no use in sayin' nair nuther word. My mind's made up, fur as I'm consarned. I 'lows, to piece up my two squars, and more'n that I aim to help quilt it out, and ef I'm er-doin' wrong it'll be on the right side."

"Go erhead, ole 'oman, go erhead," says he; "women folks is cur'ous critters. When they sets they head ter do er thing, er man might as well shet up his mouth."

And so the women pitched in and pieced up the quilt. They made stars and squars and soon patched 'em together; then whirled in and quilted it out 'fore sundown.

I tell you when Piney Grove women turns they hands to do er thing they does it. Although ole Mis' Green had talked agin it, and said right down she didn't 'low to set nairy stitch, she help out powerful in kyardin' of the bats; that 'oman's er sight, she makes the kyards fly, and her tongue keeps time.

"I don't mind kyardin," says she, "but I jist won't sew er stitch for no sich er triflin' man."

Miss Bunch Brandon, a fat, jolly ole maid, that has fun out of ever'thin' 'lowed: "I never seen that preacher but wunst, and that was at Scrogginsville, time of a big meetin' when he got up and said: 'Brethren, I've selected a text for this important occasion. I do not know that I will tetch on it; however, I will use it as a rallying p'int;' then cleared his throat and went on, 'I only desires to make a few tangent remarks in a sorter distracted way.' And after he rarred and ranted for about two or three hours and never tetched on his text, ever'body either went to sleep or got up and left. He wound up by sayin': 'Brethren, it pleased the Lord to open the hearts of my congregation last year to give me nine dollars for my services, and by a-selling a few apples and

peaches and goobres and 'taters and sich like, I managed to sorter live. To be sho' 'twasn't rich, high livin' as you town folks has, but I'm thankful to say it kep' body and soul together.' Now, I'm plum willin' to patch up my two squars and stars, for the kiver; but I agree with Mis' Green and Brother Madison, I think he oughter know—pass me the thread, Sister Simmons."

"Ladies," said Mr. Madison, putting er quid of tobacco in his mouth, and talkin' slow. "Ladies, I may be wrong in er-talkin' ergin this here quilt business, and you 'uns can do as you please, but I am out and out fernent makin' of er preacher of the gospel like he was er pauper or er begger. Give er man what his preachin' is worth and let him buy his own kiver."

"S'posen'," says Mis' Strong, "you hain't got the money and s'posen' he's raily er-needin' of the kiver?"

"Then I maintains," says he, "that he is mistaken in his callin'—but my ole 'oman is er-rollin' of her eyes at me, so I better hush 'fore I says too much. Did you ax for the scissors, Sister Strong?" He riz and handed the scissors, then went outdoors to whar the men folks was er-settin' on the horse-block er-talkin' politics. The women in the house jess stitched away.

"This here yaller scrop er caliker," says ole Mis' Freshours, "looks pine blank like Polly Ann Hasher's second day's frock. I mind mighty well how putty it was, fur I had er invite to the infar—that's—lemme see—now ergwine on forty-five year or sich, and Polly Ann's been dead ever sense 'reckly atter surrender. Pass me yer snuff, Sister Green, mine's the mackaboy, and hain't got no strenk in it. I dremp' night afore las' I bought me a box er snuff. Yes, Polly Ann's been dead right smart over twenty year, and I bin er-lookin' fur her ever' night sense, fur she promised ef ever she come back to anybody she'd come to me. I've sot in the do' many and many er night tel atter midnight er-watchin' fur that 'oman, and she hain't never come yit, and I erbout sot it down they hain't no sich er thing ez

hants. Whose got er frock like this here speckly piece, Sister Madison? I believe this here is prettiest squar in the bunch. Here's a piece er ginghams looks sorter like that ar piece er checks cloth my Becky Ann wove out 'fore she maird—hit was stripe er blue, and stripe er copperas, check back the same way, thread about in the warp and two and two in the fillin'. Sister Green, how's yer gyrden?"

"Sister Freshours," says Mis' Green, takin' er bat off'n the kyards, "I hain't got nothin' but er few stumpy little turnip greens—my kollards never done no good. I've sot out a few ingon buttons an' they are up right putty. My chickens keep ever'thin' scratched up putty nigh that I plants. I don't raise no sort but the frizzly an' the dominicks. I like the dominicks, 'case they don't have to be fed. You was er-axin' about my soap-grease. I hain't got none now to spar. I jist made up the last I had on the full of the moon. I allers make mine in the light of the moon in March, an' stirs it with a sassyfac stick an' don't stir it back'ards, an' I'm keerful an' don't let nobody else tetch the stick."

Over in tother corner sot old Miss Patience Potter listenin' to Miss Pinkney tell how sick she was with the yaller janders, her last year, fodder pullin' time. It 'pears to be the greatest pleasure some folks can have, to tell you how sick they was last year.

Gran'maw Slacker done more'n any of the crowd—she cut out the scrops and put the light ones to theyselves and dark ones to theyselves; she never talked while she worked, and her mouth twisted with ever' clip of the scissors, fust one side, then t'other; and she never riz her eyes off'n her lap.

She 'lowed: "Some folks can talk and work at the same time, and t'others can't," as she laid down the scissors and drawed her cheer up to the fire. You 'uns was er-talking about the moon. Some laughs and 'lows they don't believe in it; but laws, if I didn't watch and make my soap when she fulls, I'd lose all my soap grease sho'. I been er-gwine by the moon all my life, me and my ole man both. We allers plant ever'thin' that bars under the ground, sich as 'taters and

turnips and beets and ingons, in the dark er the moon; and ever'thin' that bars on top er the ground we plants in the light er moon, 'cept corn; hit oughter be planted in the dark er the moon. Bunch, gimme er coal er fire for my pipe. Yes, corn bars fuller years, if you plant it in the dark or on the decrease."

"I never had nairy grain er luck," says ole Mis' Freshours, "with nothin' I planted last year, and I know in reason 'twasn't becaze my truck wasn't planted right, 'caze I walked back'ards ever' bean I drapt, and I planted 'em when the sign was in the arm, too, and I never seed a bean atter I drapt 'em. I didn't know what to make er it—less 'twas that muddy water I drempt er crossin'. Gimme a dip outer your box, Sister Pinkney."

"I was er-sayin'," says ole Miss Pinkney to Miss Patience, "the yaller janders thes 'peared to creep all thu me" (Miss Patience grunted in sympathy), "and the whites of my eyes was as yaller as er punkin."

"An' my ole man," says Gran'maw Slacker, "allers kills his hogs on the new er the moon, when it's on the increase. If you kill 'em on the decrease in the dark er the moon, your meat will shrink an' all bile away to nothin'."

A sight of talkin' was done thar that day, but the work went on all the same, and the preacher's quilt was made, and the neighbors enjoyed themselves together, and had a good dinner, too; but when them Robersons, and Goodens, and ole Mis' Madison takes dinner, 'tain't no use to say 'twas good and plentiful.

Mis' Bunch made her two stars and squars, and sewed on the border, too, but stuck to it to the last, as she folded up the quilt, "If he can't preach, he oughter plough."

BILL AND BELLE.

ARDEN S. FITCH.

DECEMBER; a winter storm raging; a city enshrouded in snow;
A pile looming dim in the darkness; a gate-lodge with window aglow;
One, breasting the wind, tott'ring, ragged; a face seared by time, yet not old;
A trembling hand laid on the door-latch; a voice speaking hoarse in the cold:
"Be n't this yer' ther hospital, st'anger? They tol' me so, 'long up th' street;
I cayn't see th' name on yer lante'n 'n 'count er th' snow 'n' th' sleet.
It be, eh? 'N' down ther's th' river? I'm thankful; for then I've come right;
Hol' on! Don' shet me out, please, sir! Say, 's a woman been fotch'd yer' t'night?

"She's out'n her mind,—kinder crazy,—'n' hurted somehow on th' head;
I reckin they brought her yer' helpless; 'n' p'r'aps, sir, they brought her yer' dead.
No? None er them ten wer' a-dyin'? Wal, then I'm jes' wastin' my time;
Wot say? Wer' she drunk, 'r bin fightin'? W'y, she wa'n't th' sort fer sich crime.
Wot is she ter me? Not my wife, sir;—ah, no! would ter God it wer' so.
Fer then we'd 'a' neither bin trampin', 'n' she'd had no sorrer n'r woe.

It's too long a story ter tell yer; it goes back er good many years;
It wouldn't be no use t' tell it; 'twould on'y rile up all my tears.

"Wot's that; if I tells yer, then mebbe 'twill help yer ter find her? All right,
I'll giv' yer th' fac's fer it's sartin they've taken her som'-wher' t'night.
I wer' raised, sir, down on ther Ohio; 'n' she wer' born ther', sir, ez well;
My name's Bill,—we won't mind th' tother,—'n' she wer' know'd allers ez Belle.
We grow'd up tergether ez young 'uns,—'n' Jim, he wer' ther' in them days;
He came ther' from York State, a babby, 'n' shared in our schoolin' 'n' plays.
Jim's father, he farmed it, 'n' my home wa'n't mor'n er stone's throw from her gate;
Her father wer' pa'son, 'n' my folks kep' store 'n' a ware-'us' fer freight.

"Belle allers wer' look'd on ez han'som', from er little 'un up ter full grown;
Her ha'r wer' ez yaller ez broom-co'n, th' wa'n't no blue eyes like her own;
'Twer' quar wher' she got all her beauty,—th' pa'son wa'n't nothin' but plain—
Som' sed, from her mother, who died young, 'n' com' ter this country from Spain.
In them days down on ther Ohio we both courted Belle,—me 'n' Jim;
'N' som'times Jim tho't I wer' favor'd, 'n' som'times I tho't it wer' him.
We both on us lov'd her too hones' ter quarrel 'n' so giv' her pain,
So, keepin' good-natur'd, we spark'd her,—fust Jim, 'n' then I tried again.

"'N' this yer' went on fer a long whiles,—'twer' mor'n two winters, I know;
'Til Jim sez ter me, sez he, 'Billy, this yer's got ter end; yer'll allow
Thet both on us fellers cayn't hev her; let's one on us find out th' wo'st;
'N' then us two fools fell ter fightin' ez which on us orter speak fust.
'N' while we wuz wranglin' 'n' waitin', thet summer, a han'-som' boy came
Ter board at th' pa'son's 'n' study fer collidge. I cayn't speak his name
'Thout callin' th' curses er heav'n on him 'n' all er his race—
His heart wer' th' heart of er devil, tho' er saint mighter own'd ter his face.

"He wer' heir ter a fortun' er millyuns, they sed; 'n' th' pa'son tol' me
He wer' one er them born'd in th' pu'ple, wotever sich hatch-in' may be.
In less'n er week arter comin' he went with our Belle ev'ry-whar,
'N' Belle, she'd git mighty oneasy if Jim 'r me ever call'd thar.
She went with him days on th' river, 'n' nights w'en the full moon hed com',
Stopp'd late, 'til th' naybers got talkin',—w'ile Jim 'n' me sulk'd it ter hum.
Jes' Belle's age he wer', sca'cely older—thet smooth-faced he looked like er child—
'N' thet, I guess, blinded th' pa'son, who look'd on the'r doin's 'n' smil'd.

"Er day com' w'en they went a-boatin' 'n' thet night they didn't com' back;—
Th' nex' day she sent hum er letter what tol th' hull story so black.

Th' pa'son he foller'd 'n' foun' 'em in one er th' big east'n towns,
'N' see her, all dimuns 'n' laces, 'n' fix'd up in beautiful gowns.
He pray'd she'd com' back ter th' ole home; no use; they wa' marri'd, she sed;
But pa'son felt sure thet th' hitchin' wa'n't reg'lar but triflin', inste'd.
He com' hum alone, sore 'n' grievin', but held up his head fer her name,
'N' tol' ev'ryone she wa' marri'd, 'n' never spoke naught ter her blame.

"But Jim 'n' me didn't believe him; we never sed nothin' ter none,
We on'y shuck han's kinder silent on meetin'—our tho'ts wer' our own.
Th' pa'son soon grow'd pale 'n' feeble, 'n' sorrowin' hung down his head,
'Til, lastly, they brought him er letter, 'n' then he jes' tuck ter his bed.
Jim 'n' me went ter see him one ev'nin', 'n' w'ile we sot with him, he cried,
'N' tol' us th' hull er th' story; then, jes' faded out, 'til he died.
We berried him ther' in November, 'n' Jim 'n' me know'd th' time'd com'
W'en me 'n' him hed pressin' biznis, a-goin' to take us from hum.

"We both on us read po'r Belle's letter; its tear-mark'd trembely lines
Tol' er hunger 'n' cruel desartin',—how thet boy's skipp'd out west ter som' mines;
Them mines wot hed giv' him his millyuns, 'n' heap'd him up silver 'n' gold—

Thet gold with which honor is bought, sir, thet gold fer
which honor is sold!
We got all our money t'gether 'n' divvy'd it fair, me 'n'
Jim;
'N' then I com' east yer' ter find her, 'n' Jim, he went west
to find him.
We never let onter our people wot plans hed been laidby us
two,
But Jim 'n' me know'd, w'en we started, wot each wer'
expected to do.

"I com' ter th' town wher' he'd left her; I wasn't a-tramp-
in' it then,
But travel'd respec'able, 'n', sir, I lived like er man among
men.
I hunt'd all over thet city in places 'twer' likely she'd go,—
It tuck me th' hull er thet winter, 'n' money begun to get
low.
W'en spring broke, I went ter another, 'n' so I kep' on, nigh
a year,
But find her I couldn't, 'n' som'how begun ter git cold with
th' fear
Thet mebbe her shame 'n' her sorrer hed druv her from this
world ter one
Wher' wimmin like her is fergiven fer lovin' too fond, ez
she'd done.

"But, then, 'twould com' over me allers, ez tho' she wa' not
fur away,
Thet trampin' 'n' s'archin' 'n' waitin' I'd find her 'n' save her,
some day.
'Long 'bout in th' very nex' winter ther' com' the fust letter
from Jim,—
Ther' wuzn't no cause ter write sooner, tho' I hed writ of'en
ter him.
'Twer' dated from jail in Nevady; he sed he wer' stopping
ther' 'til

He tuck an exalted persition wot he'd been elected ter fill.
He sed thet w'ile I'd bin a-sarchin' fer Bell, she hed wande'd out west,
A-tryin' ter git ter th' villun thet wrong'd her po'r innercent breast.

"She'd broke down at las' in Missoury, 'n', dyin' er want 'n' despair,
He'd foun' her, a charity-patient, in som' instertooshin out ther'.
He stay'd ther', clus by her, 'n' tended ter hevin' her nussed, day 'n' night,
'Til th' babby wer' born'd, 'n' then waited 'til Belle hed got strong and all right.
Then he tol' her its father hed gone ter th' town wher' I wer' in ther east,—
Sed he lied, but he know'd she'd be safer nigh me than ter go ter thet beast.
He stak'd her with all thet he had, sir, 'sides payin' her passage right thro',
Then, facin' th' west'ard, he tramp'd it; I tell yer, ole Jim wa' true blue.

"He tramp'd it right out ter Nevady,—it tuck him a thunderin' w'ile;
But thinkin'er Belle'n'thet babby, his grit didn't giv'out n'r spile.
He got ter th' mines in th' winter, sick, starvin', 'n' putty nigh dead,
But sight er thet han'som' young devil put life in him pow'rful, he sed.
He track'd him 'n' hearn all about him, 'n' got onter all er his ways,—
Then, sed thet he sot ter work thinkin 'n' botherin' 'roun', fer som' days,
Wot way he wer' goin' ter git at him; w'en, suddent, th' chance seem'd ter com',
Fer, meetin' an ole chap one ev'nin', wot Jim hed know'd out yer' ter hum,

"Who'd bin out ther' minin' er long time, 'n' never'd
heer'd nothin' 'bout Belle,—
Jim ups 'n' he ax'd him ter stake him; he don' it, 'n' don' it
blame well!
Jim slick'd up er bit 'n' then tackl'd the best faro lay-out
in town;
He sed th' luck wa'n't with th' dealer,—Jim won ev'ry bet
he put down.
He quit w'en h'd collar'd three thous'n,—sed he reck'n'd
thet 'ere wa' enough;
'N' nex' day he bloom'd ez er gent, sir, 'n' shuck'd off th'
tramp 'n' th' tough.
He got interdooced ter th' youngster, who never hed know'd
him by sight;
In less'n er week they wuz playin' er small game er poker,
one night,

"With or'nary bets et beginnin'; 'fore long, tho', they run
rayther high;
At las' th' Lord giv' Jim four aces; then raisin' went up on
th' fly!
'N', w'en thet pot held jes' ten thous'n, he raked it in, Jim
did, 'n' sed,—
'I'll take this fer Belle 'n' her young 'un;' then rose up
and shot his man dead.
Jim sed ther' wa' n't much on er trial, but he shed git hung
all th' same,
So, writ me aforehan' about it, 'n' 'low'd he wer' goin' ter
die game.
He sent me th' hull er thet money 'n' sed, 'It is all fer her,
Bill;'
'N' allers, in all er my trampin's, I've kep' it, 'n' shell keep
it, 'til

"I giv' it ter Belle with Jim's blessin'. Som' sez, it won't
bring her no joy,—
Thet blessin's don't foller a hangin' w'en murder's bin don'
ter a boy.

Wal, mebbe 'tain't 'cordin' ter Scriptur' ter kill sich low varmints ez him,
But w'en th' las' reck'nin' is makin', I guess they'll be easy on Jim.
I've bin on the tramp sence thet winter from Maine down ter Texas, 'n'—well
In 'bout ev'ry town in the kentry, 'n' allers a-lookin' fer Belle.
I know'd no one else, sir, could love her ez we did—I mean me 'n' Jim,—
'N', Jim bein' gone, thet she'd take me on findin' she couldn't hev him.

"Er tramp ain't inspirin' ter look at, but 'cause he's er tramp, it don't prove
He hesn't er heart, 'n' it beatin' jes' hones' 'n' true ter some love.
I heer'd on Belle wunst in Kaintucky —it's ten year ago, sir, nex' spring—
A-teachin' at school, 'n' th' babby hed grow'd up er beautiful thing.
She worship'd thet chil' fer its father, 'twer' more like him every day;
'N' life fer them two wer' right happy,—'til one day 'twer' clean stole away
By som' ez his fam'ly hed set on her track 'n' hed hunted her down
Ter rob from th' breast er th' mother th' life thet wer' dearer 'n her own.

"Jes' mad with her grief 'n' her terror, Belle wande'd away that same night,
'N' sarched till she foun' wher' them devils hed hid her po'r chil' from her sight.
She fought her way inter thet house like a taygur 'n' fell by th' side
Er th' bed, wher' th' little 'un, lyin', jes' put out its arms—'n' then died.

'Twer' grievin' fer her ez hed kill'd it; it call'd fer her allers, they sed;
A mother's arms robb'd er th' livin',—a mother's arms holdin' th' dead!
Som' fr'en' er her'n down in Kaintucky, 'twer' tol' me all this about Belle,
'N' how it wer', w'en she com' back ther', a kind on er shadder-like fell

"Upon her, 'n' dark'n'd her reason, 'n' made her turn crazy 'n' wild,
Fergittin' about it wer' dead, sir, 'n' wantin' ter go ter th' child.
At las', w'en nobody wer' watchin', she stray'd off, nobody know'd wher';
'N' nobody bother'd to find her,—ther' wuzn't nobody to care.
So, all these yer' years we've bin trampin',—one on us hones' but mad,
Thet's her; 'n' th' t'other, thet's me, sir, not crazy like her, but jes' bad.
'N' tho', p'r'aps, we've bin nigh each other, 'n' mebbe cross'd one 'nother's ways,
Las' night wer' th' fust time I've see her; 'twer' wher' sich ole tramps ez me stays.

"A sort on er cellar fer lo'gins,—I'd gone ther' ter sleep off' th' cold—
'N', sir, she kem ter me jes' nat'ral 'n' han'som' 'n' sweet ez ov old,
Exceptin' her blue eyes look'd sadder 'n' som' on her gold ha'r wer' gray,—
Like one thet were in her September instid er th' gal-time er May.
She smil'd ez I look'd, 'n' she nodded, w'en tryin' ter speak, I sed, 'Jim;'
Sed she, 'I knows all about it, yer've got som'thin' fer me from him;

Ter-morrer I'm goin' ter find babby, 'n' then my long tramp,
'n' your'n, too,
Is done, 'n' I'll meet yer, 'n' surely begin er new life, Bill,
with you.'

"On wakin', I foun' she wer' gone, sir, but 'mem'brin' th'
promise she'd made
Ter meet me, I hustl'd out 'airly, 'n', walkin' 'n' watchin', I
stray'd
Right inter a crowd on er corner,—'twer' som'one runn'd
over, they sed,
Then som'body sed 'twer' er woman, 'n' hurt very bad on th'
head.
A heap er ole rags in th' gutter it 'peared, in th' place wher'
she fell;
A face, framed in ha'r thet wer' golden, wer' whit'nin' with
snow; yes, 'twer' Belle!
I must 'a' gone ravin' 'n' wild, sir, in tryin' ter git thro' th'
crowd,
'N' cryin' 'n' prayin' 'n' cursin' 'em all, fer not bein' allow'd.

"Th' nex' thing I know'd, I wer' stan'in' alone, with th'
snow on m' face,
'N' som'one wer' sayin' th' woman'd bin tuck ter some hos-
pital place.
So, crawlin' ter one, then another, I've com' yer' ter this one,
at las'.
Oh, sir, fer God's sake, say yer'll help me,—my stren'th is
a-failin' me fas'!
Th' pain in m' side yer' mos' kills me! Wot's that? Som'-
one else at the gate?
How loud thet bell clangs in th' midnight,—like th' voice er
som' quick-comin' fate!
A case for th' morgue, did yer say, sir? A tramp, all in
rags, sir, yer sed?
Stan' off! Lemme see! It's a woman! Oh, God; it's my
Belle, 'n' she's dead!"

TILLY BONES.

ELIZABETH WHITFIELD BELLAMY.

DIRE need of a cook made me acquainted with Tilly Bones. It was a delightful morning in early spring when Tilly presented herself as a candidate for the vacant office. The expression of her countenance was sullen and vengeful, but I had had experience to teach me that a cook may "smile and smile and be a villain," so I hoped that signs might go by contraries in Tilly's case. Nor were my hopes disappointed. Her sullen gloom of countenance did, by no means, betoken the inward spirit, for Tilly possessed a power of grin and of chuckle beyond any young African I ever saw. She was a genuine plantation darkey, and her quaint originality and keen observation furnished me unfailing amusement.

As to her name, her "Krizten" name, as she called it, was unmistakably Tilly, and another name she bore which certainly began with a B, but, owing to her peculiar utterance, this remained to me a mystery forever, and, therefore, I took the liberty of calling her Bones, partly because this was as near as I could attain to the name she gave, and partly because of her extreme angularity. She accepted her new appellation with an appreciative grin. Evidently, she considered it a distinction to have a name so difficult of pronunciation.

"Hit's a easier name ter say, Bones is," she commented, with patronizing indulgence for my inability to catch the proper sound, "en ef you knows hit, Mis' McAnderson, en I knows hit, why hit's all squay. Hit ain't Ponder's name, Bones ain't, but you ain't got no 'casion fur ter call Ponders nohow, en ef you's minded fur ter say Bones, Mis' McAnderson, why I ain't noways contrary."

Tilly talked a great deal about this "Ponders." He was her husband and a very terrible reality at times. He was directly responsible for Tilly's sour and sullen "'havior uv de visage," as I soon discovered. She was an arrant coquette, and though she professed to stand in salutary dread of Ponder's displeasure, she could never resist an opportunity to exercise her powers of fascination. She carried on lively flirtations with all gentlemen of color who came and went on the various errands pertaining to my housekeeping.

When I asked what Ponders would say to such conduct, she answered with a giggle: "Ponders he'd git me with a knife. But dullaw, sho now, Mis' McAnderson," continued Tilly on such occasions, "how Ponders gwine ter hear 'bout it? Dey ain't gwine tell, en I ain't gwine tell, en you ain't gwine tell. I allers loves ter take all de fun I kin git. Now, I sees some folks sittin' 'round doleful 'nuf ter pizen de sunshine en callin' hit 'ligion; ain't got no spirit in hit. My 'ligion ain't dat kine."

"What is your religion, Tilly?"

"Now, Mis' McAnderson, you bound ter know I ain't book-larnt. My 'ligion ain't 'cordin' ter scholarship, hit's de visitation uv de Lord, same's a miracle, en hit done struck me w'en I wa'n't mo'n so high, en I ain't never let go on hit yet. Dat how come I ain't scar't uv nuthin', en my 'ligion ain't dat kine w'at makes you doleful."

"Then I suppose you are not one of those who think it a sin to dance, Tilly?"

"W'at, me dance? No, Mis' McAnderson, some folks'll tell you dat ef you dances wid 'screshun nothin' ain't gwine ter happen ter you; but don' you put no 'pendence on dat. Dere ain't no 'screshun in dancin'; you dance en de debbil gwine ter git you; jes' as sho—douten' 'pentance," she added as she turned away, "douten' mighty airnest 'pentance."

Like all Africans, Tilly was superstitious, but she had been with me some time before I discovered that the lateness of my breakfast was directly attributable to a superstitious terror

which proved unconquerable and that ultimately lost me Tilly's services.

I should explain that, among some negroes, not one woman in ten, who is willing to hire out by the month, can be induced to take a room on her employer's premises; one and all would rather walk any distance and through any weather; Tilly was no exception to the general rule.

To all my remonstrances against a late breakfast, and entreaties for an early one, Tilly invariably replied:

"I gits bre'kfus' jes' soon's I come. How I gwine ter git hit fo' dat?"

"But, Tilly, you must come earlier. I must have breakfast on the table by half-past seven. If you will come earlier in the morning, you can go earlier in the evening."

After a pause, Tilly said with solemnity: "Mis' McAnderson, now I gwine tell you fur true, how come I don't git here no earlier. Hit's 'count dem medicum stujunts. You know dey ketches fo'ks fur ter sectionize dem."

"Nonsense, Tilly, I know nothing of the kind. Why, I thought you boasted that your religion delivered you from fear. You have let someone scare you with a silly story."

"Dat ain't what I call scared, Mis' McAnderson," said Tilly, indignantly, "hit ain't got nothin' ter do wid speritual concerns."

"Then, if you believe that nonsense, how is it that you are willing to go home after dark?"

"Dullaw, Mis' McAnderson," said Tilly, with immense condescension toward my lack of intelligence, "don' you know dey is heaps mo' folks prowlin' roun' after dark, den dey is yearly in de mornin'? Now, effen you'd try ter consider, you's 'bleeged ter onerstan' you'self. You is mo' likely to be gwine out at night den fo' sun-up, ain't you, now? Medicum stujunt come 'long atter dark, ketch you, an' you gin a squawk en somebody sho ter hear, en de medicum stujunt drap you quick. But go 'long in de gray uv de mawnin'—light nuff, mebbe, fur ter see plenty so's you don' run 'g'inst no tree, nor stumble over no cow; but der ain't

nuffin' ter hear 'ceppin' de silence uv things, der ain't no smoke on de housetops, 'caze ever'body fas' asleep. Way erway along yander, mebbe, nudder fool skeerd's you'self, scootin' froo de dimness. En yere come de medicum stujunt wid bag, tie you neck en heel, en dat fool way over yander w'en he hear you squawk, he cut en run, so skeered his time gwine come nex'. Medicum stujunt go 'long wid bag over his shoulder, folkses think he man wid corn en gwine ter mill, en you jes' a-smudderin'. No, Mis' McAnderson, dat resk am too heavy for me," Tilly concluded with a solemn shake of her head.

And so, at last, it came to pass that as nothing could eradicate from Tilly's mind this ghastly terror that interfered so seriously with my breakfast hour, we parted company. I have always regretted that I did not ask her to describe more minutely the appearance of a "medicum stujunt" for hers was a Dantesque imagination. However, she has left a sufficiently strong impression on my mind; for, never do I see a man with a well-filled "sack over his shoulder," without an involuntary mental query, accompanied by a shudder that defies reason, as to whether Tilly Bones's bones may not be inside that sack.

THE LOVEJOY COW.

I TELL you, Kate, that Lovejoy cow is worth her weight in gold;
She gives a good eight quart of milk, and isn't yet five year old.
I see young White a-comin' in, he wants her, I know that.
Be careful, girl, you're spillin' it; an' save some for the cat.
"Good evenin', Richard, step right in." "I guess I couldn't, sir,
I've just come down"—"I know it, Dick, you've took a shine to her.

She's kind an' gentle as a lamb; jest where I go she follers,
An though it's cheap, I'll let her go, she's yourn for thirty dollars.
You'll know her clear across the farm by them two milk-white stars;
You needn't drive her home at night but jest let down the bars.
Then, when you've owned her, say a month, and larnt her, as it were,
I'll bet—why, what's the matter, Dick?" "'Tain't her I want—it's *her!*"
"What! not the *girl?* Well, I'll be blessed! There, Kate, don't drop the pan!
You've taken me mightily aback, but then a man's a man.
She's yourn, my boy, but one word more: Kate's gentle as a dove,
She'll foller you the whole world round for nothin' else than love;
But never try to drive the lass, her nature's like her ma's;
I've allays found it worked the best to jest let down the bars."

TRIALS OF THE MUSICAL AMATEUR.

JEROME K. JEROME.

IT must be disheartening work learning a musical instrument.

I knew a young fellow once, who was studying to play the bagpipes, and you would be surprised at the amount of opposition he had to contend with. Why, not even from the members of his own family did he receive what you could call active encouragement. His father was dead against the business from the beginning, and spoke quite unfeelingly on the subject.

My friend used to get up early in the morning to practice, but he had to give that plan up, because of his sister. She was somewhat religiously inclined, and she said it seemed such an awful thing to begin the day like that.

So he sat up at night instead, and played after the family had gone to bed, but that did not do, as it got the house such a bad name. People going home late would stop outside to listen, and then tell it all over the town, the next morning, that a fearful murder had been committed at Mr. Jefferson's the night before; and would describe how they had heard the victim's shrieks and the brutal oaths and curses of the murderer, followed by the prayer for mercy, and the last dying gurgle of the corpse.

So they let him practice in the daytime, in the back-kitchen, with all the doors shut; but his more successful passages could generally be heard in the sitting-room, in spite of these precautions, and would affect his mother almost to tears. She said it put her in mind of her poor father (he had been swallowed up by a shark, poor man, while bathing off the coast of New Guinea), but where the connection came in, she could not explain.

Then they knocked up a little place for him at the bottom of the garden, about quarter of a mile from the house, and made him take the machine down there when he wanted to work it. Sometimes a visitor would come to the house who knew nothing of the matter, and they would forget to tell him all about it, and caution him, and he would go out for a stroll round the garden and suddenly get within earshot of those bagpipes, without being prepared for it, or knowing what it was. If he were a man of strong mind, it only gave him fits; but a person of mere average intellect it usually sent mad.

There is, it must be confessed, something very sad about the early efforts of an amateur in bagpipes. I have felt that myself when listening to my young friend. They appear to be a trying instrument to perform upon. You have to get

enough breath for the whole tune before you start—at least, so I gathered from watching my friend.

He would begin magnificently with a wild, full, come-to-the-battle sort of a note, that quite roused you. But he would get more and more piano as he went on, and the last verse generally collapsed in the middle with a splutter and a hiss.

You want to be in good health to play the bagpipes.

My young friend only learned to play one tune on those bagpipes; but I never heard any complaints about the insufficiency of his repertoire—none whatever. "The Campbells are coming, hooray—hooray!" so he said, though his father always held that it was "The Blue Bells of Scotland." Nobody seemed quite sure what it was exactly, but they all agreed that it sounded Scotch. Strangers were allowed three guesses, but most of them guessed a different tune each time.

A FROG STORY.

COME, Winnie, come, the clock strikes eight,
The pillow waits to feel
Those curly locks of silk and gold,
And cool those rosy cheeks—
What, still too wide-awake?
The fun just leaks out at your eyes,
And each finger-tip so white
Is tingling like a roguish sprite
All ready to play pranks on me.
Well, come and sit upon my knee
And let me tell you—what d'you think?
I'll tell you—let me see—a— Yes,
I'll tell you how the big old frog,
The great, green, goggled-eyed old frog,
The s-l-e-e-p-y, old papa frog,

And the careful old mamma frog,
And the gray uncle frog,
And the lean long auntie frog,
And the jolly young cousin frog
With his spotted jacket—the dog,
Such a dandy is he—on a log—
And the sweet white-breasted frog
(The cousin frog's own Miss Frog),
And all the frogs,—
How they grumble and scold,
And coax and worry
Because the wee little froggies
Won't go to sleep—won't go to sleep.

When the night grows dark,
And far away the little dogs bark,
And the little birds rest,
Every one in its nest
Under its mother's wing,
Then the little wee froggies
Are every one
Chock full of fun,
And they wink and blink
And chatter and squawk:
"Cutty-up-cutty-up-rink-a-pink,
Wide-awake, wide-awake, chink-a-rink,
Can't sleep, not a wink-wink-k-k-k."
Then the great, green, goggled-eyed old frog roars out:
"Go-der-zleep! go-der-zleep!
Hush yer noise! hush yer noise!
Go-der zleep!"
But the little wee froggies say:
"Wide-awake, wide-awake,
Cutty-up—cutty-up—r-r-pink!"
Then the old mamma frog groans out:
"Hush, my dears! hush, my dears!"
And the uncle frog growls

"Spank 'um! spank 'um!"
And the auntie frog whines
"Spare the rod, spile the child—the child!"
And the cousin frog snarls
"Ker flog! ker flog!"
And the pretty Miss Frog drawls in disgust:
"Dear me, did you ever,—noisy things, noisy things!"
So the wee bit folk, and the big old folk
Keep grumbling and growling all together:
"Go-der-zleep dill mo-r-n-in'——"
"Cutty-up, cutty-up, wide-awake, wide-awake!"
"Hush, my dears, sh,—my dears."
"Rink-a-pink—rink-a-pi-nk."
"Did you ever,—noisy things."
"Spank um! spank 'um!"
"Wide-awake, wide-awake!"
"Ker flog! ker flog!"
"Go-der-zleep! go-der-zleep!
Fast—azleep—till—m-o-r-n-i-n'!"

LITTLE LIZETTE.

KATHERINE S. ALCORN.

[By permission of the author and *St. Nicholas.*]

AS little Lizette was out walking one day,
Attired with great splendor in festal array,
She met little Gretchen in sober-hued gown,
With a basket of eggs trudging off to the town.
"Good morning! Good morning!" cried little Lizette,
"You haven't been over to visit me yet.
Come over and live with me always, pray do.
For I have no sisters. How many have you?"

"Nein," answered wee Gretchen. Lizette cried, "Ah, me!
I have to pretend I have sisters, you see.
But try as I will I can't make it seem true.
And I have no brothers. How many have you?"
"Nein," answered wee Gretchen. "Nine," echoed Lizette,
"Why you are the luckiest girl I have met;
And have you a baby at home, tell me now?"
"Nein," answered wee Gretchen, and made a droll bow.
Then lingered Lizette by the roadside that day,
To watch the wee maiden go trudging away,
"Nine brothers, nine sisters, nine babies to pet!
Oh, I wish I was Gretchen," sighed little Lizette.

ROBIN GOOD-FELLOW.

Written before 1649.

FROM Oberon, in fairyland,
The king of ghosts and shadows there,
Mad Robin, I, at his command,
Am sent to view the night-sports here.
What revel rout
Is kept about,
In every corner where I go,
I will o'ersee,
And merry be,
And make good sport with "ho, ho, ho!"

More swift than lightning can I fly
About this airy welkin soon;
And in a minute's space descry
Each thing that's done below the moon.
There's not a hag
Or sport shall wag

Or cry "'Ware goblins!" where I go;
But Robin, I,
Their feasts will spy,
And send them home with "ho, ho, ho!"

Whene'er such wanderers I meet,
As from their night-sports they trudge home,
With counterfeiting voice I greet,
And call them on with me to roam.
Through woods, through lakes,
Through bogs, through brakes,
Or else unseen, with them I go;
All in the nick
To play some trick,
And frolic it with "ho, ho, ho!"

Sometimes I meet them like a man,
Sometimes an ox, sometimes a hound;
And to a horse I turn me can,
To trip and trot about them round.
But if to ride
My back they stride,
More swift than wind away I go,
O'er hedge and lands,
Through pools and ponds,
I hurry, laughing "ho, ho, ho!"

When lads and lasses merry be,
With possets and with junkets fine,
Unseen of all the company,
I eat their cakes and drink their wine.
And, to make sport,
I puff and snort,
And out the candles I do blow.
The maids I kiss,
They shriek "Who's this?"
I answer naught but "Ho, ho, ho!"

Yet now and then, the maids to please,
At midnight I card up their wool;
And while they sleep and take their ease,
With wheel to thread their flax I pull.
I grind at mill
Their malt up still;
I dress their hemp; I spin their tow;
If any wake
And would me take,
I wend me, laughing "ho, ho, ho!"

When any need to borrow aught,
We lend them what they do require,
And for the use demand we naught;
Our own is all that we desire.
If to repay
They do delay,
Abroad among them then I go,
And night by night
I them affright,
With pinchings, dreams, and "ho, ho, ho!"

By wells and rills, in meadows green,
We nightly dance our hey-dey guise;
And to our fairy king and queen,
We chant our moonlight minstrelsies.
When larks 'gin sing,
Away we fling,
And babes new-born steal as we go;
And elf in bed
We leave instead,
And wend us, laughing "ho, ho, ho!"

From hag-bred Merlin's time have I
Thus nightly reveled to and fro;
And for my pranks men call me by
The name of Robin Good-fellow.

Fiends, ghosts, and sprites,
Who haunt the nights,
The hags and goblins, do me know;
And beldames old
My fates have told,
So, *vale*, *vale*, ho, ho, ho!

HOW COLONEL ASHTON SIGNED THE PLEDGE.

K. A. PETERS.

[By permission of the author and *Youth's Companion.*]

WHEN Tom and Polly Miller came home from school in the darkening twilight of a cold winter's day, they found that a strange horse was in the barn, and a broken carriage in the barnyard, and that Colonel Ashton was lying unconscious on Grandma Mears's bed in the downstairs bedroom.

After carefully scanning all these unusual features of the landscape, Tom pompously remarked: "Polly, these are undoubtedly the remains of a disastrous catastrophe."

Polly, feeling that so many big words must surely be an adequate explanation of any occurrence, however extraordinary, said "Yes." Then she seized hold of her mother and asked, "Mother, what is the matter? Is Colonel Ashton killed?"

"No, my dear, but badly hurt. His horse ran away, broke the carriage, and threw the colonel out into the road."

"But I don't see how a horse could run away with a man who was a soldier and fought all through the war," said Tom.

"He never would have, Tom," said Dr. Baker, who came out into the kitchen just then, "if the soldier had not been intoxicated. Remember it, my boy, and never put

anything into your mouth to steal away your brains." Then he and Mrs. Miller went back to the colonel.

Now, the colonel, who had fought with honor all during the Civil War, was a great hero to Tom and to Polly. So later in the evening, they held an indignation meeting to talk over the disaster.

"I feel sorry enough to cry out loud," said Polly, and she was about to do so when she suddenly stopped and said impressively: "I'm awful glad of one thing!"

"I don't see anything to be glad about," said Tom.

"Well, I do. I'm glad that the horse threw him in front of our house."

"That's so. You're a brick, Polly, if you are a girl."

"And I'm glad he only broke his ribs and cut his head, instead of killing himself."

"Polly Miller," said Tom, "you've almost brains enough to be a boy;" which was the very highest praise he could give her.

The colonel was too much injured to be moved, so he lay there, day after day, on Grandma Mears's bed. Mrs. Miller kept Polly home from school to "save steps," and she and Polly took care of him by day, and Mr. Miller by night.

Polly felt very proud of her position as assistant nurse, and as the colonel began to recover he grew very fond of the plump, round little girl, whose black eyes smiled at him so pityingly, and who never seemed to tire running errands for his comfort.

One afternoon, Mrs. Baker, the doctor's wife, came over to see her husband's patient, who happened to be taking a nap at the time.

Only the evening before Polly had told Tom in confidence, "It's just wonderful how often the colonel is taking a nap when the solemn, cross people come to see him. I don't know how he does it but he'll be talking away to me real nice about battles and things, and somebody will knock at the sitting-room door. Then I go to let them in and if it's the deacon or any of the cross, solemn people, he'll

be sound asleep before I get back in the room to tell him they are there."

"Perhaps he smells a rat," said Tom, who was by no means a dull boy.

"But there are no rats to smell," said Polly.

"Polly," said Tom, in his most dignified tone, "you are only a girl, after all, and you have your limitations."

"On this afternoon, when the doctor's wife came, the colonel took one of his convenient naps; so Polly put on her hood and went out to hunt eggs.

When she came back she heard Mrs. Baker saying to her mother: "Now, Mrs. Miller, this is an unmistakable leading of Providence. This man was thrown from his carriage right at your very door, and almost killed, and it is your bounden duty to wrestle and to pray with him till you bring him to a sense of his sins and his need of saving grace."

"But he has a praying father, who prays for him every day. I am sure of it."

"But praying for him has not availed. You can see that for yourself. You must pray with him, wrestle with him, until he promises to forsake his sin."

Just then Mr. Miller came into the kitchen and the conversation came to an abrupt close, but Mrs. Barker's words made a deep impression on Polly. She watched her mother keenly, but she seemed to forget all about Mrs. Baker's warning, and so Polly felt that the burden of the colonel's sins was laid upon her little fat shoulders.

The next Sunday afternoon, the colonel was so far recovered as to be dressed, and was lying upon the sitting-room lounge. Mr. Miller and Tom had driven over to Aunt Rose's to bring Grandma Mears home, and Mrs. Miller had been sent for by a neighbor whose baby had been taken with the croup; so, with an injunction to Polly to see to the milk broth she had left on the stove and to take good care of the colonel, she left Polly alone with him. Now, all this while, Polly was laying her plans. She saw her mother go, with

a secret feeling of gladness; for now was her opportunity to wrestle and to pray with the colonel. She drew up her little rocking-chair and sat down at the head of the lounge, and an expression of unusual solemnity came over her little face and she sighed heavily.

"What's the matter, Polly?"

"Colonel Ashton, do you know that you've been very near eternity for the last few weeks?"

He stroked his moustache a moment in silence, and then said: "Aren't we always near to eternity, Polly?"

"I don't know. But we won't talk about that, we'll come to the wrestling and the praying; but I can't wrestle with you, because the doctor and mother said you must not move round any, 'cause it would hurt you. I really don't think you ought to be wrestled with, colonel."

"I should be afraid to try it, Polly."

"Well, then, there's only the praying left. I can pray, though I never prayed out loud to anyone but mother before, so, colonel, won't you please sign the pledge without my praying out loud with you?"

"Can't do it, Polly."

"But why not?"

"For many reasons that a little girl cannot understand."

"Dear me! Then I've got to pray with you, colonel. But I only know two prayers, 'Now I lay me,' and 'Our Father.'"

"That's a very good prayer, Polly."

"Why, do you know 'Our Father,' colonel?"

"Yes, Polly, I said it at my mother's knee every night, when I was a boy."

Kneeling down by the nearest chair, Polly reverently repeated the Lord's prayer. Then she turned her bright face toward the colonel and said: "Now, colonel, won't you please sign the pledge?"

"I'm sorry but I can't, Polly."

Again the curly head bowed in reverence and she began "Our Father which art in heaven." When she had finished,

she looked up at him and said, "Now won't you sign it, colonel? I'll pray for you every day, and so will Grandma Mears, too, if you only will. Please do, colonel."

"But suppose I couldn't keep it after I had signed it?"

"Oh, but you could try again, and we'd pray so hard. Please say 'yes.'"

"Well,—yes."

"Oh, thank you. Now, I'll get the pencil and the paper, and you write the pledge."

"No, Polly, I was to sign the pledge, not to write it."

"Who will write it, then?"

"I'm afraid you will have to."

"But I can't write, I can only print. Will that do?"

"Yes."

"Will you spell the words for me, colonel?"

"Certainly, go ahead."

Except when he spelled a word for Polly, the colonel lay as still as if he were asleep; but Polly worked steadily on and on, until she laid down the pencil at last, with a sigh of relief.

"It's done, colonel, and here is the pencil for you to sign it."

He picked up the crumpled paper and, for a moment, a mist before his eyes prevented his reading it, but soon the irregular, straggling letters shaped themselves into these words: "Colonel Ashton promises his friend, Polly Miller, never to get drunk any more. Never!" Silently he wrote "Henry Ashton," and handed the paper back to her, and she put it in her pocket.

Just then she heard Tom and her father and Grandma Mears, and ran to welcome them. Soon Mrs. Miller came, too, and in the hurry of getting supper, the pledge was forgotten. But that evening the deacon and his wife came over to see about moving the colonel to his own home.

Now, the deacon was a stiff, reserved man, and as soon as he got into the room all pleasant conversation hushed.

Then he said to his brother: "I hope you feel sincerely

thankful to the Lord for sparing your life and that you are duly convinced of the error of your ways, and determined to live a new life."

The colonel's face darkened ominously; but before anyone could speak, Polly sprang up from her chair at the head of the lounge, crying:

"O yes, sir, he's done it. He's all right now. He's signed the pledge," and she produced the crumpled piece of paper from her pocket.

"Read it to us, child," said the deacon, wiping his glasses. So Polly read out in a quavering voice: "Colonel Ashton promises his friend, Polly Miller, never to get drunk any more. Never! Henry Ashton."

"Let us pray," said the deacon, and they all knelt down, but no one said a word, until the colonel whispered to Polly, "You pray, Polly." Slowly and reverently Polly repeated "Our Father," and they all said "Amen."

THE DEATH OF GUINEVERE.

H. L. KOOPMAN.

IT was the season when there falls no night,
But all the dusk, from sun to sun, is filled
With golden twilight deepening into dawn.
Then all the air is fragrance, all the earth
Fit carpeted for footstool of its King,
With bloom and softness. Every hour is fair,
But fairest glows the even, when the west
Uplifts its gates of pearl, and over them
The roofs and towers and spires of ruby and gold.
Then pious hearts think on the heavenly city,
And saintly eyes, wept dim o'er sins forgiven

Now weep for rapture of the glory revealed.
But song of bird nor breath of blossom touched,
With any thrill, the sick heart of the queen.
Upon her bed she lay. Around, her maids
Stood weeping, while her fevered dreams outbrake:

"He loves me still, and now I go to him
To be his bride within the halls of light.
Upon their threshold he stands waiting for me,
My Arthur, king; but not as first I went,
Go I to meet him in that purer world.
This time how gladly, knowing him at last!
Dreaming no more of pomp and dalliance,
But sadly chastened with repented sin,
And purified by toil and fast and prayer,
I go to meet him who shall welcome me.
He loves me, ay! and even as at first,
When he loved only what he deemed I was,
Not what I was indeed. But now, made fair,
Save for the scars of memory, I rise
Assured of thine acceptance, O my king!

"He loves me. But with earthly lips he spake.
Will he now love me in the spirit world,
Where hearts are undisguised, no beauty shines
But of the soul, nor any charm allures,
Save only purity and holiness?
Are there not myriads in the world of bliss
To be whose handmaid I were all unmeet?
Consorts he not with these, and now through them
Should I win way to him? Far other thoughts
Than memory of me must fill his soul,
Who wronged him so and served him here so ill.
He loves me? Rather say he hates me not.
So at least unrebuked, I may behold him.
Only to see him, this were joy enough,
My Arthur. Nay, but shall I be content

There she saw him, far away,
  Fighting as the heroes fought.
And she swept amid the fray
  Nearer to the one she sought.
Nearer to her love she came,
Then she called aloud his name;
Loudly, with no thought of shame.

All the warriors round her saw
  But a fragile, fearless boy
Sweeping onward evermore,
  With a look of wondrous joy.
Saw they not death's missiles fly,
Heard they not the ringing cry,
Nor did they see her fall and die.

But the stalwart knight behind,
  Whom her form had shielded well,
Saw her in a glory shrined,
  As she turned, and smiled, and fell.
Swift he dropped his bloody sword,
And he cried aloud on God,
For he knew his Ladye Maude.

Quiet on the battle-field,
  Ghastly underneath the moon.
Every warrior who did yield
  His good sword, or late or soon,
Lay upon the meadow dead,
Stiff, upon his last hard bed;
Calm the stars looked down o'erhead.

Pale the moon rose, full and round,
  Liquid bright behind the hill;
And it fell upon the ground
  Where two dead lay, cold, and still,
Wrapped in one long, close embrace,

Heart to heart and face to face,
Battle-field their trysting-place.

So the stalwart warrior died
  For his country—it was well;
But the woman at his side,
  For her love's dear sake she fell.
Red between them lies his sword,
Ne'er to part them, now with God,
Happy now, O Ladye Maude.

A TRYING SITUATION.

MARK TWAIN.

[Arranged from "A Tramp Abroad." By permission of the author.]

AS Harris and I sat, one morning, at one of the small round tables of the great hotel in Luzerne, watching the crowd of people coming, going, and breakfasting, we noticed a young lady, evidently an American, at a table not far from us. We agreed at once that she was very beautiful and very tastefully dressed, but we disagreed as to her age. I said she was eighteen, Harris said she was twenty.

The dispute between us waxed warm, and I finally said with a pretence of being in earnest: "Well, there is one way to settle the matter—I will go and ask her."

Harris said, sarcastically, "Certainly, that is the thing to do. Of course, she will be glad to see you."

Then he hinted that perhaps there wasn't much danger of my venturing to speak to her.

I said: "I was only talking—I didn't intend to approach her, but I see you do not know what an intrepid person I

am. I am not afraid of any woman that walks. I will go and speak to this young girl."

The thing I had in mind was not difficult. I meant to address her in the most respectful manner, and ask her to pardon me if her strong resemblance to a former acquaintance of mine was deceiving me; and when she should reply that the name I mentioned was not the name she bore, I meant to beg pardon again most respectfully, and retire. So I walked to her table and was about to begin my little speech when she exclaimed:

"I knew I wasn't mistaken—I told John it was you! John said probably it wasn't, but I knew I was right. I said you would recognize me presently and come over, and I'm so glad you did. Sit down, sit down! How odd it is—you are the last person I was ever expecting to see again."

This was a stupefying surprise. However, we shook hands all round cordially and sat down. Truly, this was the tightest place I was ever in. I seemed to vaguely remember the girl's face now, but I had no idea where I had seen it before, or what name belonged with it.

She began at once: "O dear! what a night that was when the sea washed the forward boats away. Do you remember it?"

"O don't I!" said I—but I didn't.

"And don't you remember how frightened poor Mary was, and how she cried?"

"Indeed I do! Dear me, how it all comes back."

I fervently wished it would come back—but my memory was a blank.

"Do you know George married Mary after all?"

"Why, no! Did he?"

"Indeed he did. He said he didn't believe she was half as much to blame as her father was, and I thought he was right. Didn't you?"

"Of course he was. It was a perfectly plain case. I always said so."

"Why, no you didn't—at least that summer."

"Oh, no, not that summer. No, you are perfectly right about that. It was the following winter that I said it."

"Well, as it turned out, Mary was not in the least to blame. It was all her father's fault—at least his and old Darley's."

It was necessary to say something—so I said:

"I always considered Darley a troublesome old thing."

"So he was, but then they always had a great affection for him, although he had so many eccentricities. You remember that when the weather was the least cold, he would try to come into the house."

I was rather afraid to proceed. Evidently, Darley was not a man,—he must be some other kind of animal—possibly a dog, may be an elephant. However, tails are common to all animals, so I ventured to say:

"And what a tail he had."

"One! He had a thousand!"

This was bewildering. I did not know quite what to say, so I only said:

"Yes, he was rather well fixed in the matter of tails."

"For a negro, and a crazy one at that, I should say he was," said she.

It was getting pretty sultry for me. I said to myself:

"Is it possible she is going to stop there, and wait for me to speak? If she does, the conversation is blocked. A negro with a thousand tails is a topic which a person cannot talk upon fluently and instructively without more or less preparation. As to diving rashly into such a vast subject,—"

But here to my gratitude, she interrupted my thought by saying:

"Yes, when it comes to tales of his crazy woes, there was simply no end to them if anybody would listen. His own quarters were comfortable enough, but when the weather was cold, the family was sure to have his company. Nothing could keep him out of the house. But they always bore it kindly because he had saved Tom's life years before. You remember Tom?"

"Oh, perfectly. Fine fellow he was, too."

"Yes, he was. And what a pretty little thing his child was!"

"You may well say that. I never saw a prettier child."

"You named it. What was that name? I can't call it to mind."

It appeared to me that the ice was getting pretty thin here. I would have given something to know what the child's name was.

However, I had the good luck to think of a name that would fit either sex, so I brought it out:

"I named it Frances."

"For a relation I suppose? But you named the one that died, too, one that I never saw. What did you call that one?"

I was out of neutral names, but as the child was dead and she had never seen it, I thought I might risk a name for it and trust to luck, therefore I said:

"I called that one Thomas Henry."

She said, musingly, "That is very singular, very singular."

I sat still and let the cold sweat run down. I was in a great deal of trouble but I believed I could worry through if she didn't ask me to name any more children. I was wondering where the lightning was going to strike next, when she said:

"How I have enjoyed this talk on old happy times! Haven't you?"

"I never have spent such a half-hour in all my life before!" said I, with emotion, and I could have added with a near approach to truth, "and I would rather be scalped than spend another one like it."

But I was grateful to be through with the ordeal, and was about to make my good-byes and get out, when the girl said:

"But there is one thing that is ever so puzzling to me."

"Why, what is that?"

"That dead child's name. What did you say it was?"

Here was another balmy place to be in; I had forgotten the child's name; I hadn't imagined it would be needed again. However, I had to pretend to know, anyway, so I said:

"Joseph William."

"No, you said Thomas Henry. I remember now."

"Oh, yes! I was thinking of another child that I named. I have named a great many and I get them confused—this one was named Thomas Henry—yes, Thomas Henry was the poor child's name. I named him for Thomas,—er—Thomas Carlyle, the great author, you know,—and Henry—er,—er, Henry the Eighth. The parents were very grateful to have a child named Thomas Henry."

"That makes it more singular than ever," murmured my beautiful friend.

"Does it? Why?"

"Because when the parents speak of that child now, they always call it Susan Amelia."

That spiked my gun. I could not say anything. I was entirely out of verbal obliquities. To go further would be to lie, and that I would not do, so I simply sat still and suffered, sat mutely and resignedly there, and sizzled, for I was being slowly fried to death in my own blushes. Presently the enemy laughed a happy laugh, and said:

"I have enjoyed this talk over old times, but you have not. I saw very soon that you were only pretending to know me, and so, as I had wasted a compliment on you in the beginning, I made up my mind to punish you. And I have succeeded pretty well. I was glad to see that you knew George and Tom and Darley, for I had never heard of them before and, therefore, could not be sure that you had; and I was glad to learn the names of those imaginary children, too. One can get quite a fund of information out of you if one goes at it cleverly. Mary and the storm, and the sweeping away of the forward boats, were facts; all the rest was fiction. Mary was my sister; her full name was Mary Rogers. *Now* do you remember me?"

"Yes," I said, "I do remember you now; and you are as hard-hearted as you were thirteen years ago in that ship, else you wouldn't have punished me so. You haven't changed your nature or your person in any way at all. You look just as young as you did then, and you are just as beautiful as you were then. There—if that speech moves you any, let's fly the flag of truce with the understanding that I am conquered and confess it."

All of which was agreed to and accomplished on the spot.

CHILD AND MOTHER.

EUGENE FIELD.

O MOTHER-MY-LOVE, if you'll give me your hand,
And go where I ask you to wander,
I will lead you away to a beautiful land,
The Dreamland that's waiting out yonder.
We'll walk in a sweet posie garden out there,
Where moonlight and starlight are streaming,
And the flowers and the birds are filling the air
With the fragrance and music of dreaming.

There'll be no little tired-out boy to undress,
No questions or cares to perplex you;
There'll be no little bruises or bumps to caress,
Nor patching of stockings to vex you;
For I'll rock you away on a silver dew stream,
And sing you to sleep when you're weary,
And no one shall know of our beautiful dream
But you and your own little dearie.

And when I'm tired I'll nestle my head
  In the bosom that's soothed me so often,
And the wide-awake stars shall sing, in my stead,
  A song which our dreamland shall soften.
So, Mother-My-Love, let me take your dear hand,
  And away through the starlight we'll wander.
Away through the mist to the beautiful land,
  The Dreamland that's waiting out yonder.

THE GRAPEVINE SWING.

SAMUEL MINTURN PECK.

WHEN I was a boy on the old plantation,
  Down by the deep bayou,
The fairest spot of all creation
  Under the arching blue,
When the wind came over the cotton and corn
  To the long, slim loop I'd spring,
With brown feet bare and hat brim torn
  And swing in the grapevine swing.
    Swinging in the grapevine swing,
    Laughing where the wild birds sing,
      I dream and sigh
      For the days gone by
  Swinging in the grapevine swing.

Out o'er the water-lilies, bonnie and bright,
  Back to the moss-grown trees;
I shouted and laughed with a heart as light
  As a wild rose tossed by the breeze.
The mocking-bird joined in my reckless glee,
  I longed for no angel's wing.

I was just as near heaven as I wanted to be,
Swinging in the grapevine swing!
Swinging in the grapevine swing,
Laughing where the wild birds sing.
Oh, to be a boy,
With a heart full of joy,
Swinging in the grapevine swing.

I'm weary at morn, I'm weary at night,
I'm fretted and sore of heart;
And care is sowing my locks with white
As I wend through the fevered mart.
I'm tired of the world, with its pride and pomp
And fame seems a worthless thing;
I'd barter it all for one day's romp,
And a swing in the grapevine swing.
Swinging in the grapevine swing,
Laughing where the wild birds sing.
I would I were away
From the world to-day,
Swinging in the grapevine swing.

GRANNY.

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY.

[From "Afterwhiles" by permission of the author and the Bowen-Merrill Co.]

GRANNY'S come to our house,
And ho! my lawzy-daisy!
All the childern round the place
Is ist a-runnin' crazy!
Fetched a cake fer little Jake,
And fetched a pie fer Nanny,

And fetched a pear fer all the pack
  That runs to kiss ther Granny.

Lucy Ellen's in her lap
  And Wade, and Silas Walker
Both's a-ridin' on her foot,
  And Pollos on the rocker;
And Marthy's twins, from Aunt Marin's
  And little orphant Anny,
All's a-eatin' gingerbread
  And giggle-un at Granny!

Tells us all the fairy tales
  Ever thought er wundered—
And 'bundance o' other stories,
  Bet she knows a hundred!
Bob's the one fer "Whittington"
  And "Golden Locks" fer Fanny.
Hear 'em laugh and clasp ther hands,
  Listenin' at Granny!

"Jack the Giant-Killer" 's good—
  And "Bean-Stalk" 's another—
So's the one of Cinderell'
  And her old godmother;
That 'uns best of all the rest—
  Bestest one of any,—
Where the mices scampers home,
  Like we runs to Granny.

Granny's come to our house,
  Ho! my lawzy-daisy!
All the childern round the place
  Is ist a-runnin' crazy!
Fetched a cake fer little Jake
  And fetched a pie fer Nanny
And fetched a pear fer all the pack
  That runs to kiss ther Granny.

THE USUAL WAY.

THERE was once a little man, and his rod and line he took,
For he said, "I'll go a-fishing in the neighboring brook."
And it chanced a little maiden was walking out that day,
And they met—in the usual way.

Then he sat him down beside her, and an hour or two went by,
But still upon the grassy brink his rod and line did lie;
"I thought," she shyly whispered, "you'd be fishing all the day."
And he was—in the usual way.

So he gravely took his rod in hand and threw the line about,
But the fish perceived distinctly, he was not looking out;
And he said, "Sweetheart, I love you," but she said she could not stay,
But she did—in the usual way.

Then the stars came out above them, and she gave a little sigh,
As they watched the silver ripples, like the moments, running by;
"We must say good-bye," she whispered, by the alders old and gray,
And they did—in the usual way.

And day by day beside the stream, they wandered to and fro,
And day by day the fishes swam securely down below,
Till this little story ended, as such little stories may
Very much—in the usual way.

And now that they are married, do they always bill and coo?
Do they never fret or quarrel, like other couples do?
Does he cherish her and love her? does she honor and obey?
Well, they do—in the usual way.

OUR HIRED GIRL.

FRANK R. STOCKTON.

[Arranged from "Rudder Grange." By permission of the author.]

OUR girl's name was Pomona. I do not know whether that was her real name or not, and I do not think she was quite sure about it herself, for she had not been long with us before she expressed a desire to be called Claire. This longing of her heart was, however, denied her, and Euphenia, who was always correct, called her Pomona. I did the same—whenever I could think of it.

She was an earnest, hearty girl, always in good humor, and whenever Euphenia told her to do anything she instantly did it with a bang. The only thing I disliked about Pomona was her taste for literature. It was not literature I disliked, but her very peculiar taste. She used to read every night in the kitchen, after she had washed the dishes. If she had not read aloud I would not have minded it so much, but she was one of those persons who can never read without pronouncing in a distinct and measured tone every syllable of what they are reading, and when the matter thus read appeals to one's every sense of aversion, and there is no way of getting away from it, the case is hard indeed.

From the first I was of the opinion to order Pomona, if she could not attain the power of silent perusal, to cease from reading altogether; but Euphenia would not hear of it.

"Poor thing," she said, "it would be cruel to take from her her only recreation, and she says she can't read any other way. You needn't listen if you don't want to hear it."

That was all very well from an abstract point of view, but the fact was, the more I didn't want to listen, the more I heard.

As the evenings grew cold we sat in our dining-room, and the wall between it and the kitchen seemed to have no power whatever of arresting sound, so that whenever I sat down to read or to reflect, I would be aroused by the fact that "The la-dy Ce-ce-lia did not flinch but seiz-ed the wea-pon and although the burly vil-la-in retain-ed his hold drew it through his fingers and hurled it far behind her dripping with gore."

Now this sort of thing, kept up for an hour or more, drove me nearly wild. On one occasion, however, even Euphenia's influence could not restrain me from violent interference. It was our boarder's night out, when he was detained in town late by his business, and Pomona, who never objected to sitting (or getting) up late, was sitting up for him. On this particular night I was very tired and sleepy, and no sooner got into bed than I dropped into a delightful slumber; but I had not been asleep long before I was awakened to hear that "Sarah did not run but as the rabid an-i-mal approach-ed grasp-ed the heated i-ron in her uninjured hand and flung it at his——"

"My conscience!" said I to Euphenia, "can't that girl be stopped?"

"You wouldn't have her sit up there and do nothing, would you?" said she.

"No, but she needn't read out in that way," said I.

"But she can't read any other way," answered Euphenia drowsily.

"'Ha, ha! Lord Marmont thundered, thou too shalt suffer all this poor girl——'"

"I can't stand this and I won't," said I. "Why don't she sit in the kitchen, the dining-room is no place for her."

"She can't sit in the kitchen," said Euphenia, "there's a window pane out. Can't you cover up your head?"

"If I do I can't breathe," I growled, "but, of course, that don't matter."

The reading continued, "Yell after yell resounded as he wildly sprang——"

I sprang out of bed—Euphenia thought I was going for

my revolver and she gave one bound and stuck her head out the door.

"Pomona, fly!" she cried.

"Yes, ma'am," replied Pomona, and she flew, where I do not know, but she took the lamp with her, and I heard distinct syllables of agony and of blood till the boarder came home, and Pomona went to bed.

HOW THE GATES CAME AJAR.

HELEN L. BOSTWICK.

'TWAS whispered one morning in heaven how the little child-angel May,
In the shade of the great, white portal, sat sorrowing night and day.
How she said to the stately warden—he of the key and bar—
"O angel, sweet angel! I pray you, set the beautiful gates ajar—
Only a little, won't you set the beautiful gates ajar!

"I can hear my mother weeping; she is lonely; she cannot see
A glimmer of light in the darkness when the gates shut after me.
Oh! turn me the key, sweet angel, the splendor will shine so far!"
But the warden answered, "I dare not set the beautiful gates ajar."
Spoke low and answered: "I dare not set the beautiful gates ajar."

Then up rose Mary the Blessed, sweet Mary, mother of Christ:

Her hand on the hand of the angel she laid, and the touch sufficed.
Turned was the key in the portal, fell ringing the golden bar
And lo! in the little child's fingers stood the beautiful gates ajar!

"And the key for no further using, to my Blessed Son shall be given,"
Said Mary, mother of Jesus, tenderest heart in heaven.
Now, never a sad-eyed mother but may catch the glory afar,
Since safe in the Lord Christ's bosom are the keys of the gates ajar;
Close hid in the dear Christ's bosom, and the gates forever ajar!

THE MITTEN.

A. W. BELLAW.

SIMPSON GREEN I hate like smoke—
We wuz arter the same gal.
Las' night in a crowd he spoke;
Thar wuz Zeb, an' Cy, an' Al.
"Boys," sez he, "I've got a joke
On Uziah—Pilkin's Sal
Gin him the mitten."

How he heard it I don't know.
Then they turned their lafs on me.
"Boys," sez I, "what Sim said's so."
He was tickled, I could see.
"Sim 'n' I wuz both her beau.
Let me tell you jus' how she
Gin me the mitten.

"We wuz thar in one o' them swings
At the picnic, Sat'day week;
Seemed as if we went on wings
Back 'n' forruds like a streak.
To my arm she up 'n' clings
With a han' thet I see peek
Through a silk mitten.

"Couldn't b'lieve that it wuz me.
I wuz sure that she wuz her.
They quit pushin' us, yit we,
We went furder 'n' more fur.
Jus' like flyin' it seemed to be,
An' my heart all ov a stir
With 'at han' 'n' mitten!

"'Sal,' I said, 'ef I could fly
This-a-way through life with you,
I 'ud never want to die,
Tell me now, 'n' tell me true,
Which you love mos', Sim or I?
Pinch that arm until it's blue
With 'at han' in th' mitten.'

"But she didn't squeeze, 'n' says:
'One o' you I like fust rate,
But I like the other bes'.
'Ziah, let me tell you straight,
Hopin' it won't spile your res',
I've been thinkin' much o' late
To gi' you the mitten.'

"Well, you bet I *did* feel cheap,
'N' I wisht the rope 'ud break.
Then I thought how Sim 'ud leap!
'Yes, the mitten you must take,'
Sal said. 'Something else to keep
With it goes.' The *hand*, by Jake,
Was in the mitten!"

TWO OPINIONS.

EUGENE FIELD.

US two wuz boys when we fell out—nigh to the age uv
my youngest now;
Don't rec'lect what 'twuz about, some small difference, I'l
allow.
Lived next neighbors twenty years, a-hatin' each other, me
'nd Jim—
He havin' his opinyun uv me 'nd I havin' my opinyun uv
him.

Grew up together 'nd wouldn't speak, courted sisters, 'nd
marr'd 'em, too;
'Tended same meetin'-house onct a week, a-hatin' each
other, through 'nd through!
But when Abe Linken asked the West f'r soldiers, we
answered—me 'nd Jim—
He havin' his opinyun uv me 'nd I havin' my opinyun uv
him.

But down in Tennessee one night there wuz sound uv firin'
far away,
'Nd the sergeant allowed there'd be a fight with the Johnnie
Rebs some time nex' day;
'Nd as I wuz thinkin' uv Lizzie 'nd home, Jim stood afore
me, long 'nd slim—
He havin' his opinyun uv me 'nd I havin' my opinyun uv
him!

Seemed like we knew there wuz goin' to be serious trouble
f'r me 'nd him—

Us two shuck hands, did Jim 'nd me, but never a word from me or Jim,
He went his way 'nd I went mine, 'nd into the battle's roar went we—
I havin' my opinyun uv Jim, 'nd he havin' his opinyun uv me!

Jim never come back from the war again, but I hain't forgot that last, last night,
When, waitin' f'r orders, us two men made up 'nd shuck hands before the fight;
'Nd, after it all, it's soothin' to know that here I be 'nd yonder's Jim—
He havin' his opinyun uv me 'nd I havin' my opinyun uv him!

YELLOW ROSES.

J. HOOKER HAMERSLEY.

'TIS the "old, old story" of youth and maid, through memory's chasms, reechoing low.
Of rich yellow roses, a cluster he sent, in the long ago—in the long ago.
A wee dainty note in its heart lay hid, 'mong the buds concealed, like a fairy sprite;
"At the ball," it read, "if with me you'll wed, wear a rose to-night—wear a rose to-night."
Bewildered by light, by sound and sight, with nascent hope his spirit glows.

Now the heart beats fast, for she comes at last; but alas! no rose—alas, no rose!
Without one word, unseen, unheard, with smothered sigh and downcast eye;
With a cheek that burns, and a heart that breaks, he passes by—he passes by.
With a breast that throbs, and a brain on fire, with bated breath, and a sudden start,
Her lover's "good night" to the host she hears like a knell at her heart—like a knell at her heart.
Years many have flown, o'er oceans unknown though roaming, he ever remembers that day;
"Lang syne" is sweet, once more they meet, their locks are gray—their locks are gray.
"'Tis a fancy interred in the tomb of our years, youth has ever," he muses, "for age a charm."
So he tells her at last, for the tempest is past, and his heart is calm—his heart is calm.
"Golden roses, as rich as the oriole's wing, that day on my heart is engraven," cries she;
"But the note 'mong the roses, so carefully hid was ne'er seen by me—ne'er seen by me."
Then she lifts with care, from a "casket rare," oft sunned by smiles, oft bedewed by tears,
The dear yellow roses, still treasured by love, through those weary years—through those weary years.
Silken cord of the sky's lightest blue she unties, like a gem in the earth at that cluster's core
Rests the dainty, triangular, sweet-scented note, never found before—never found before.
Ah! there's many a wreck on time's rough sea, that the world knows not—shall never know,
And there's many a heart guards its faded rose of the long ago—of the long ego.

THE SIGN-BOARD.

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

I WILL paint you a sign, rumseller, and hang it above your door;
A truer and better sign-board than ever you had before.
I will paint with the skill of a master, and many shall pause to see
This wonderful piece of painting, so like reality.

I will paint yourself, rumseller, as you wait for that fair young boy,
Just in the morning of manhood, a mother's pride and joy.
He has no thought of stopping, but you greet him with a smile,
And you seem so blithe and friendly, that he pauses to chat awhile.

I will paint you again, rumseller, I will paint you as you stand,
With a foaming glass of liquor, extended in your hand.
He wavers, but you urge him: "Drink! pledge me just this one!"
And he lifts the glass and drains it, and the hellish work is done.

And next I will paint a drunkard—only a year has flown,
But into this loathsome creature the fair young boy has grown.
The work was sure and rapid. I will paint him as he lies
In a torpid drunken slumber, under the wintry skies.

I will paint the form of the mother, as she kneels at her darling's side—

Her beautiful boy that was dearer than all the world beside.
I will paint the shape of a coffin labeled with one word—
"Lost!"
I will paint all this, rumseller, and will paint it free of cost.

The sin and the shame and the sorrow, the crime and the want and the woe
That are born there in your workshop, no hand can paint, you know.
But I'll paint you a sign, rumseller, and many shall pause to view
This wonderful swinging sign-board, so terribly, fearfully true.

THEY SANG FOR IT.

CERTAINLY, No. 1 Crawlin Place was a dingy abode at any time, but as Carol came in sight of it, one bright afternoon, a few days before Christmas, his mind full of much pleasanter places, he gave a little sigh of disapproval, and muttered, not gloomily but honestly, "It looks meaner than ever!" As he looked up at No. 1, a ray of the sun seemed to contradict him, as it fell brightly upon a window in the fourth story, and lighted it up so wonderfully that Carol forgot how dingy it was as he darted up the old stairs, and startled old Aunt Kizzy, who sat by the sunny window.

"Darn up the old stocking I saw dangling on the line, Aunt Kizzy," he cried, breathlessly, as he ran up to her.

"I'll make it strong enough to hold two cents' worth of snuff," she said, cheerily.

"I'm sure this will be a lucky Christmas. I saw three stars shoot last night—one for each of us. And look! count that—before mother comes," said Carol, pouring a handful of pennies and silver into her lap.

"Massy! massy! where did you get it, child. You ain't—"

"It's all right, Aunt Kizzy, good, honest money, for mother's present. You go buy it, for I must get some more, or there won't be any snuff."

She caught him by his jacket as he was flying past her, and sat him down in the old rocking-chair.

"Sit there, child, and tell me where you got this money."

"I won't tell."

Aunt Kizzy's back became very stiff as she handed him back the money."

"It's all right, but if you must know," he dropped his voice to a mysterious whisper, "I sang for it."

"Where, child?"

"In the street."

"Like a beggar?"

"No, not quite. I didn't ask for money; they gave it to me."

"What did you sing, you scamp, you?" asked Aunt Kizzy, forgetting her point in her curiosity.

"I sang everything I knew—even the one you sang to me last night."

Aunt Kizzy dropped the money slowly, piece by piece, into her lap.

"Seventy cents, Carol!"

"Get anything you think she'd like," whispered he and darted away.

"Seventy cents! Well! well! well! Ain't you ashamed of yourself for want of faith, old Kizzy Hopkins? Straighten up your wig and start out and see what you can do. Count up your change and don't be envying old women who bear heavier purses than yourself."

She put on her bonnet and started out.

"If *he* can sing for money, so can you, old Kizzy H., so put down your pride, and go and do it."

She soon left Crawlin Place far behind her. The houses began to have a well-to-do look. On she walked until the

streets grew wide and the houses very fine. She walked on without an idea where to stop, but at last a house with the curtains up attracted her attention. She went up the stairs and rang the bell.

"If you please, miss," she begun, as the door opened.

"Back door for beggars," said the servant, shortly.

With a choking feeling in her throat, Aunt Kizzy went slowly down the long steps. House after house was passed, before another took her fancy, but at last she came to one.

"Don't look quite so grand as 'tother." she thought, as she looked in at the window. "There's a picture of Christ a-blessin' little children. It makes me feel awful old. Purty little creeturs!" and she went up the high steps.

As her hand touched the bell, she heard a light step behind her, and a sweet voice said: "Whom do you wish to see?"

"I came—" Aunt Kizzy's voice was a little unsteady, "I—I came to see if any of the ladies would like to hear a little old-fashioned singin'."

"I certainly should," said the young lady, "and I am sure grandmamma would." And she led Aunt Kizzy in, and in a moment she actually found herself standing before a sofa, on which lay a proud-looking, handsome old lady.

"She is going to sing us some old-fashioned songs," explained the young lady, as her grandmother stared at them.

Aunt Kizzy felt dreadfully nervous, but she stood up respectfully before them, and in a voice not by any means to be despised, sang a simple ballad of "ye olden time."

"Can you sing another?" asked the young lady, as the last note died away.

"I don't want another, yet," said her grandmother, "Please sing that one over again."

Aunt Kizzy's heart beat joyfully. She had forgotten money. There was happiness in the thought of being able to give pleasure. She sang till her old voice sounded weary, and

they declared she should sing no more. Then the young lady gave her a dollar.

"Too much," said Aunt Kizzy, firmly.

"A dollar for a good concert is not too much," said the old lady. "And I have not enjoyed one so well for many a day."

"If you insist, I must take it," said Aunt Kizzy, her eyes shining as she thought of Carol's Christmas stocking.

"Let me give you this muff," said the young lady, "it is old but warm." And Aunt Kizzy took it thankfully and went home to Crawlin Place with a happy heart.

On Christmas morning, Aunt Kizzy, Carol, and Carol's mother sat before the fire in the little sitting-room talking over their happy Christmas.

"Don't you call this a lucky Christmas?" said Carol, as he put on new mittens, and his mother stood with her hands in the muff, while Aunt Kizzy took snuff extravagantly.

"Nothing to do with luck," said Aunt Kizzy; "we worked for it."

"Tell me, Aunt, how did you earn your money?" said Carol's mother.

"I'll tell if you will," answered Aunt Kizzy.

"I just as soon tell. I sang for it."

For a full minute Aunt Kizzy and Carol stared at each other, and then exclaimed: "Like a beggar?"

"Oh, no," said she, laughing. "I didn't ask for money, but they gave me some. I sang in church last Sunday. Now, how did you get yours?"

"*We* sang for it, too," cried Carol.

Aunt Kizzy settled her wig and said, "Let's tune up. Here's faith for the future forever!" and three grateful voices rang out with a praise to Him who, in sending His Christmas blessings down, forgot not even so humble a spot as No. 1 Crawlin Place.

WERNER'S

READINGS AND RECITATIONS.

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Armada, The. Macaulay.
Aylmer's Field. Alfred Tennyson.
Beggar's Daughter of Bednall Green, The. Percy Reliques.
Building of the House, The. Chas. Mackay.
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Count Albert and Fair Rosalie. Scott.
Death of Rowland, The. Robert Buchanan.
Death of Mary Stuart, The. James Anthony Froude.
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No. 2.—COMPILED BY ELSIE M. WILBOR.

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Aunt Peggy and High Art. Mary K. Dallas.
Elf-Child and the Minister, The. N. Hawthorne.
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Coventry Christmas Carol.
Deck the Hall with Boughs of Holly.
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When the Minister Came to Tea. Juliet Wilbor Tompkins.
Why the Dog's Tail Was Skinned. Ar. by Stanley Schell.
Woman's Vengeance. Thomas F. Wilford.

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No. 15 All-Round Recitations

EDGAR S WERNER
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Pauline Phelps's Monologues and Other Pieces.

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As the Moon Rose. 25c. Recitation. Revolutionary War. 8 min. Girl makes perilous horse-back ride to carry pardon for lover unjustly condemned as spy. Manuscript lesson talk. $1.

Aunt Elnora's Hero. 25c. Monologue. Comedy. 10 min. Girl. Ten-year old girl tells how she, by dressing up in sheet and jack-o'-lantern head, scares man her old-maid aunt thinks a hero and wants to marry.

Aunt Sarah on Bicycles. 25c. Monologue. Comedy. 10 min. Woman. Elderly maiden lady tells how niece and son of a neighbor with whom she has been at odds run off on a tandem and get married, followed in a wagon by herself and the father, and how the ride leads to their becoming engaged. Manuscript lesson-talk. $1.

Average Boy. 25c. Comedy country dialect character sketch verse recital. 10 min. Banjo and bone effects. City boy maintains that country pleasures cannot compare with delights of a vaudeville show and reveals he is secretly practising to join minstrel show. Elaborate lesson-talk by the author.

Biff Perkins's Toboggan Slide. 25c. Monologue. Comedy. 10 min. Boy. Boy gets old-maid aunt and a professor on his sled and an upset leads to matrimony. "A sled and a boy and a custard pie make an awful good combination."

Cook, The. 25c. Monologue. Comedy. 10 min. Woman. Cook costume. Irish dialect. Cook, directed by mistress not to open door for callers, follows instructions when, at night, a cat is raising a terrible rumpus in the dining-room, upsetting various things, racket bringing in police.

Deacon Slocum's Presence of Mind. 25c. Monologue. Comedy. 10 min. Woman. Yankee dialect. Outstripped by women in putting out a fire a deacon (who has had much to say about men's superiority over women), ends a 20 years' courtship by proposing.

Family Plate. 25c. Monologue. Comedy. 8 min. Woman. Irish dialect. Women tells of ludicrous events resulting from getting ready and attempting to have her family photographed.

Firetown's New Schoolhouse. 25c. Monologue. Comedy. 12 min. Woman. Deacon's wife tells how neighborhood assembles to vote whether it shall have new schoolhouse. After an exciting time, the first ballot being a tie, she slips out and bribes "Hermit Jim" to rush in and vote for a new schoolhouse.

Her Cuban Tea. 25c. Monologue. Comedy. 10 min. Woman. Hostess, being disappointed by grocer, serves strong cider to afternoon-tea guests, calling it "Cuban tea." They all get lively. Business given.

How Mr. Simonson Took Care of the Baby. 25c. Recitation. Comedy 10 min. A father claims he can tend baby without half the fuss made by mother. He undertakes to quiet it and slaps child who shrieks. After many vain attempts he is compelled to hand child back to mother, to amusement of depot spectators.

Jolly Brick, A. 25c. Monologue. Pathos. 8 min. Boy. Bowery bootblack tells story of his chum, "a jolly brick," who died in a fire to save the life of a "little cove he looked out for." Full of interest and pathos.

Just Commonplace. 25c. Recital. Patriotic. 10 min. In colloquial language, the self-depreciating narration about a real hero at Antietam, who could play only one tune—"The Star Spangled Banner"—on the fife, but that saved the day. Patriotic, pathetic and full of heart interest.

Midnight Courtship. 25c. Play. 1 Act. 1m., 2f., or Monologue. Comedy. 10 min. Young lawyer, annoyed by adverse newspaper criticism and fearful of having lost his first case and sweetheart, is made happy by her unexpected appearance at midnight in boarding-house parlor and by her announcing him as her fiance, to prevent talk of landlady and boarders. Business given.

Millinery Melee. 25c. Monologue. Comedy. 10 min. Woman. Newly-married woman, who takes husband to help select a hat, is so upset by his meeting a former sweetheart that she not only fails to buy a hat, but directs suspicion to herself as shoplifter. Business given.

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"Pauline Phelps's Pieces" Continued on 3d Cover Page.

Minister's Black Nance. 25c. Recitation. Horse-race. 10 min. Crowd at country fair horse-race is shocked to see minister's horse enter race and to learn that, instead of minister's son, the minister's daughter is the driver, and wins the race.

Old Benedict Arnold. 25c. Recitation. Tragic. Revolutionary War. 15 min. Yankee dialect. Granduncle of Benedict Arnold boasts of bravery of the young hero, and gives spirited description of battle of Saratoga. "Benedict Arnold's turned traitor" is the postrider's news that interrupts, and the old man burns his quondam hero in effigy and himself leaps into the fire. Manuscript lesson-talk, $1.

Rosalind's Surrender. 25c. Monologue. Patriotism. Romance. Illustrated. 15 min. Woman. A Virginia girl, whose ancestors fought for the Stars and Stripes, waves the Union flag as her Union lover goes by. Business given.

Scorching vs. Diamonds. 25c. Monologue. Comedy. 10 min. Woman. Whimsical old woman promises diamond necklace to grandniece whose conduct is most pleasing. The heroine, to cure aunt's headache, wheels to town for medicine, is nearly arrested for scorching and ends in a collision. Her victim falls in love with her and she gets the diamonds.

Seven Ages of Man. 25c. Pantomimed Poem. Burlesque. 15 min. Any number. Poem by Shakespeare, pantomime by P. helps. Pictures infant, schoolboy, lover, soldier, justice, old man, very old man.

Shakespearian Conference. 25c. Play. Burlesque. 45 min. 4m, 5f. Cleopatra, Lady Macbeth, Juliet, Desdemona, "Miss Cawdor," Romeo, Hamlet, Macbeth and Shylock hold a conference to discuss "The Unpopularity of Shakespeare's Plays and the Remedy for It," and incidentally to increase and collect their royalties. A clever medley of Shakespearian language, modern slang and nonsense. Business given. Manuscript lesson-talk, $1.

Spinster Thurber's Carpet. 25c. Recitation. Revolutionary War. 10 min. Old maid, reprimanded for extravagance for buying a carpet while Continental troops are suffering at Valley Forge, puts committee to flight by her sharp tongue.

Story of Hard Times. 25c. Monologue. Pathos. 15 min. Man. Man tells pathetic story of when he was out of work with wife and sick child to care for. By saving a dog in a fire, he obtains the long-sought-for employment.

Sweet-Girl Graduate. 25c. Monologue. Comedy. 10 min. Woman. Graduating dress. Girl is rehearsing graduating essay when chums come, and there follows a mixture of high-flowing essay and schoolgirl nonsense; also a scene between girl and lover, just before she goes on platform to take part in commencement exercises. Business given.

Telephone Romance. 25c. Monologue. Comedy. Elocution Lesson. 10 min. Woman. Sitting-room with telephone scene. Girl passing through a fit of jealousy finally calls lover through 'phone to hasten to her house to protect her from a supposed mouse. Full business and lesson-talk.

Thanksgiving Day at Grandma's. 25c. Recitation. 8 min. Boy. Verse. Yankee Dialect. Boy tells of preparations for and good times on Thanksgiving at farm where his whole family go, and rejoices that he is only "a common boy" so he can enjoy "turkeys 'n' Thanksgivin's" which "keep a-comin' ev'ry year." Elaborate lesson-talk by the author.

Trial Performance. 25c. Monologue. (Woman) or 1-act Play for 2f. Comedy. 10 min. Scene between theatrical agent and stage-struck country girl determined to get a hearing, and who inflicts samples of her acting on discomforted agent. Opportunity for a varied performance. Business given.

New Pauline Phelps's Pieces.

Betsy Holden's Burglars. 25c. Yankee Dialect Comedy Monologue for a Woman. 15 min. New England timid spinster has various surprises and interruptions while waiting for guests to annual family reunion, greatest surprise being return after long absence and proposal of lover.

Daisy's Music Practice Hour. 25c. Comedy Girl Monologue. Music specially arranged by A. J. Goodrich. 20 min. Ten-year-old girl interrupts her compulsory piano lesson with all sorts of excuses, protests and remarks. Piece can be expanded by various comedy effects. All the music is given.

Dumb-waiter Difficulty. 25c. Acting Monologue for a Woman. 15 min. Girl gushes over engagement ring and over lover whose letter she reads while awaiting him to take her to concert. Mistaking janitor, mending door, for a dog, she blows pepper through keyhole; and, fearing janitor will vent his wrath on lover, she gets lover to come in dumb-waiter, which gets stuck; other occupants of house get involved with ludicrous results, lover in disheveled condition finally reaching her from fire-escape. Full lesson-talk by author.

Reverend Mr. Tuffscrappen. 25c. Recitation. 15 min. Flaming red-haired man combines tin-peddling and preaching; takes rebuffs good-humoredly, and by force of real ability and perseverance wins rich man's daughter for wife.

What a Masquerade Did. 25c. Romantic Comedy Monologue for a Woman. 15 min. Eligible society widow, jealous of attentions paid to stepdaughter, schemes to get rid of her by marrying her to rich and elderly man; but, mistaking at a masquerade girl's real (and poor) lover for the other man, she opens way for lovers to elope; whereupon rich man proposes to and is accepted by widow.